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a journal of East & West studies

ANDROPOV & CHERNENKO

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Chernenko—The Future of the Past

Leopold Labedz

RECENTLY a story has been circulating in Moscow about two friends on their way to Andropov's funeral. One was hurrying the other, who was taking his time. " Come on, come on, " he said, " otherwise we'll be late." " So what," came the reply, " we'll be in time for the next one."

Despite the fact that Chernenko, in his role as ideological controller, has been promoting " socialist realism " in the Soviet arts and literature, it would seem that it is " socialist funerealism " that prevails in Soviet life. While the gerontocrats turn within their power circle, the wheel of death inevitably thins their ranks. After Brezhnev, Andropov; after Andropov, Chernenko . . . And so on from " dummy to mummy."

In the perspective of many Western commentators, the unavoidable rejuvenation of the Soviet élite is optimistically associated with reform of the system and—yet another *non sequitur*—with improved chances for a reduction in Soviet aggressiveness.

What they overlook is the possibility that the younger generation of *apparatchiki* may be both more efficient and more dangerous than the older generation. " Youth " is a relative concept in Soviet political life; at the level of the relevant political institutions—the Politburo, the Secretariat, and the Central Committee—it is considered to be not much below 60, which is not exactly the age of innocence. Whatever their vintage, *apparatchiki* have a mighty vested interest in the perpetuation of their own power and privilege. Their mentality in 1984 is no less Orwellian.

The euphoric hopes in the West generated by each succession are simply absurd. The new leaders are greeted monotonously by Western hopefuls with renewed enthusiasm. The situation seems to have got even worse in this respect. While the Soviet Union was becoming a military menace to the West, the accumulation of historical experience only resulted in new rationalizations of old fallacies by Western " progressives " (and by some " reactionaries "). It is striking to compare the editorial line and " Letters to the Editor " (reflecting the climate of opinion among its readers) of the old *Manchester Guardian* (see pp. 119–65) with the present *Guardian*. This tendency is rather widespread in spite of the fact that the Soviet leaders look increasingly like the interchangeable bureaucrats that they are. On the occasion of each " enthronement " a synthetic " cult of (successive) personality " is artificially fostered within a framework of the " routinization of (lack of) charisma." The system of *Nomenklatura* cements the Soviet political élite and assures continuity in its internal and external behaviour. In this context the role of individual personality at the top becomes less important. It is wrong to perceive Soviet policies, particularly foreign policies, in terms of the personal preferences of one or another Soviet

leader. Andropov made the point explicit when he said: " we are not naïve people," and this undoubtedly applies also to Chernenko. Primitivism is not the same as *naïveté*.

THE changing of the guard within the leadership, like the turnover of generations within the wider political context, has been characterized since Khrushchev's time by a tenacious tendency to combine external expansionism with internal immobility. Consequently, although the Soviet Union has become a superpower, its domestic problems have been building up, particularly in the economy. For more than 30 years now Stalin's heirs have been trying to avoid major innovations and do not even tinker with the institutional set-up he bequeathed them. Ironically they have gone further than him in formalizing the domination of society by the state in the new Soviet Constitution, which explicitly imposes such obligations on the Soviet " citizen " that, even constitutionally, he in effect becomes a state serf. Despite creeping re-Stalinization, they could not in practice reintroduce mass terror as this would threaten their own personal security, not to mention other negative consequences. They have avoided innovation in the economy, fearing that any significant economic reform would undermine Party totalitarian controls, and thereby their own power and status. But the cost of the expanding empire is rising while the Soviet rate of economic growth is falling. In a perspective where the Soviet Utopia's " radiant future " is no longer so persuasive or attractive, and the internal failures can only be compensated by external successes, difficult dilemmas will confront any Soviet leadership.

The leaders can whip up " patriotic " frenzy and imperial jingoism, but these cannot substantially increase Soviet productivity; nor is Andropov's " discipline " likely to improve it significantly. In the long run neither the tightening of controls nor the proposed educational reform will make much difference in respect of the intractable problems of the Soviet economy (the falling rate of growth, agricultural backwardness, rigidity of planning, corruption), unless these are dealt with squarely through the introduction of economic incentives with market mechanisms. But what then would happen to the Soviet system?

Soon after Chernenko's assumption of power, *Pravda* (24 February 1984) printed a scathing attack on the Moscow Economics Institute of the Academy of Sciences and its organ *Problems of Economics*, but although it did not include the Novosibirsk Institute (see pp. 83–108) in its criticism, its accusations were directed not only at the lack of practical results, but also at the low level of ideological awareness among the economists in question (see also pp. 9–21). The new leadership manifests the same dual approach of wanting to have its cake efficiently produced and being able to eat it with effective Party control. But these two *desiderata* are incompatible.

Small Change From Big Brother

The succession of Konstantin Chernenko to Mr Andropov put paid to the speculation about the possible prospects of any significant internal reform. Chernenko, the protégé of Brezhnev, is similarly disinclined to tinker with the Soviet system.

In his role as spokesman on ideology Chernenko expressed his basic attitude to the problem of economic reform in a speech (at the June 1983 Party plenum) in which he stressed that:

> there exist truths which are not subject to revision, problems that were solved long ago and without further ramifications . . .

His zeal included even music as a target of his censure, castigating " musical ensembles whose repertoires are of a dubious nature " causing " ideological and aesthetic harm " to the Soviet people.

This does not leave much room for the hopes so widely expressed in the Western Press on Andropov's assumption of power about the latter's " liberalism " and " sophistication " as allegedly manifested in the devotion to English whisky and all that Western jazz. . . .

Mr Chernenko is going to cling to his familiar ways, even though he might make some cosmetic economic changes in the face of the same intractable problems which confronted his predecessor (low productivity, falling rate of growth, agricultural backwardness, inefficient system of incentives due to the absence of market mechanisms, corruption and social immobility).

The simple contrast between Soviet " conservatives " and " reformers " just as the contrast between " hawks " and " doves," so beloved by Western commentators, is of course quite misleading.

There are no " liberals," " reformers " or " doves " in the present Politburo. The fact that Chernenko was chosen does not indicate that either Romanov or Gorbachev would have been inclined to challenge the Party apparatus of which Chernenko is spokesman. Nor has Mr Chernenko any chance in his Brezhnevian comeback to stop the generational change in the Soviet élite.

The general inclination in the West is to see a silver lining on the occasion of each and every Soviet succession hoping for a change in the basic Soviet policy. Hope springs eternal in Western breasts at the funeral of each successive Soviet leader, in spite of the lessons of the 66 years of Soviet history which testifies to the continuity of Soviet foreign policy.

The nomination of Chernenko may perhaps slightly dampen such euphoric hopes, which were invariably expressed on such occasions. Stalin was considered a " moderate " in contrast to the " flaming revolutionary " Trotsky. Malenkov and Beria were presented as " liberals." Khrushchev was supposed to be compelled to turn inwards because of " de-Stalinization." Brezhnev was " pragmatic," promoting " *détente* " (until Afghanistan and Poland), Andropov was a " closet liberal " (in spite of his role in Hungary in 1956 and his mental prisons for Soviet dissidents). Now it is the turn of Chernenko: one can already hear the usual chorus of Western commentators discovering the hitherto unknown liberal virtues of the " new " man.

In the past the record of Kremlinologists was not very impressive: no one thought of Stalin as a successor to Lenin, or of Khrushchev as a successor to Stalin. The ouster of Khrushchev in 1964 was predicted only in the astrological yearbook, " Old Moore's Almanac." With Andropov and Chernenko the forecasting record is a bit better, but the political significance of it is less exciting.

In the administrative greyness of Soviet officialdom the victory of a bureaucratic Tweedledum over a bureaucratic Tweedledee is now less significant than in the past. All the present Soviet Cleopatras have, so to say, very similar noses.

If Chernenko, in spite of his relative political decline, was chosen as a new leader, it suggests that there was no agreement on a younger successor to Andropov, and thus he is to be regarded as an " interim " Number One. It also suggests the profound fear of innovation in the Politburo, if it could take the risk of nominating somebody of Chernenko's age (72), in spite of the experience with Brezhnev and Andropov.

In any case, one horse was bound to come in first, and it will make little difference from the point of view of Western interests. If anything, a rejuvenated team ruling the same totalitarian empire would be even more dangerous than their gerontocratic predecessors. It is of course difficult to know when Mr Chernenko will reach " the age of ailing " and when Western commentators will be able to say that Russia is again ruled by a Romanov.

Leopold Labedz
The Daily Telegraph (London)
14 February 1984

THE differences of approach between Andropov and Chernenko are unlikely to be very great, as even a comparison of their respective speeches on assuming power indicates. They face the same problems and their room for manoeuvre was and still is limited. The only significant difference between their two speeches is that Chernenko directly addressed the Party *obkom* secretaries and extolled their role. This is all too understandable since they (and not the KGB, as was the case with Andropov) comprise his power basis. But on wider issues of policy the similarities are dictated by the facts of the situation.

Under Chernenko the Soviet leaders will still try to wriggle out of the horns of their dilemmas and will attempt to sacrifice neither their internal nor their external positions. Western policies are unlikely to force them into making a clear-cut decision in favour of internal re-orientation, economic reform and political relaxation. In the light of past experience, whenever the Soviet leaders are confronted with difficult problems, it is the West that provides them with the means to avoid facing their dilemmas squarely, and rescues them from having to make unpleasant choices. Opportunities for playing on " capitalist contradictions," for exploiting transatlantic differences within NATO, are now greater than before, when the Soviet Union was not such a powerful military presence and could not, as it increasingly does now, play the " peace " game through intimidation and a " strategy of fear." European proto-neutralism, which feeds American neo-isolationism—still surprisingly weak—provides the Soviet Union with a ray of hope.

In the past, the internal or external causes of the decline of an empire were often connected either with the disintegration of the principles of its legitimacy or with its bloating beyond the point at which its controls and influence cease to be effective. In the long run the Soviet Union has every reason to be concerned about its historic prospects. Its Marxist universalist pretensions and its un-Marxist economic basis (technologically lagging behind the capitalist West) are too feeble to sustain its imperial ambitions—particularly with regard to aid to its poor " revolutionary " clients in the strategically attractive Third World. The cost of armaments is more crippling to the Soviet Union than to its rivals, and yet provokes the only element of self-confidence and satisfaction for the Soviet ruling élite.

It is this juxtaposition that provides a " window of understanding " for the present point of Soviet evolution. But what will happen in the forthcoming Chernenko " era," however " interim," will also depend on whether the Western allies abstain from their recurring bouts of wishful thinking. Preserving the necessary minimum of unity and pursuing policies which will compel the Soviet leaders to restrict their ambitions is the best way to avoid nuclear dangers as well as the dangers of nuclear blackmail. It is the only way to preserve Western security, and also provide a non-totalitarian perspective for the evolution of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

And Now Chernenko

Iain Elliot

" The party and people are united."
Pravda

" The people remain silent."
Pushkin

IN a state whose citizens are habitually required to suspend their disbelief, the treatment by the Soviet media of the death of President Andropov and the Chernenko succession excelled even their own previous record. The population was told little, consulted even less and was expected to do nothing but applaud the deceased Andropov and welcome his replacement. This exercise in enforced public acquiescence confirmed Soviet citizens in their routine role as the passive subjects of a stagnating regime.

" The Communist Party and the entire Soviet people have suffered a heavy loss," proclaimed *Pravda* on 13 February 1984. It continued:

> The country is grieving. Mourning meetings are being held everywhere . . . In paying tribute to a man who devoted his entire life, energy and knowledge to the struggle for the triumph of communist ideals, Soviet people are expressing their boundless loyalty to the Communist Party's cause and are rallying their ranks even more closely around its Leninist Central Committee. The working people of the land of the Soviets see the Communist Party as their tested collective leader and are fully determined to struggle selflessly to implement its domestic and foreign policy.

The " boundless loyalty " of the population was encouraged by increasing the military and security police presence in the capital, but little effort was made to consult any of the workers on the party's policies or on whether Konstantin Chernenko, already the centre of attention as the head of the funeral commission, would be an acceptable general secretary. Of course the true *vox populi* is found not in *Pravda* but in the ubiquitous political anecdote.

There were several jokes about Yurii Andropov – the new field of study, Andropology; the new name for Moscow, Andropolis; the new vodka, Andropovka; but the most cruelly apposite after months without any public appearance by the leader came in the traditional question and answer form: " Is there an Andropov personality cult?" "We have the personality cult, but there is no Andropov!" For most Russians, the replacement of Andropov by Konstantin Chernenko must mean that now

the leadership does not even possess sufficient personality on which to base a cult.

ON 13 February 1984 Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko was confirmed as the new CPSU General Secretary–only 15 months after he had been passed over in favour of a man three years his junior. Although Chernenko seems relatively fit for his 72 years, there were reports that his absences from the public scene last year were caused by pneumonia, and that he suffers from emphysema. Certainly during the funeral of President Andropov on 14 February he had difficulty holding up his hand in a farewell salute.

Yet as much as his advanced age and doubtful state of health, it is his narrow bureaucratic background and lack of experience which make him appear no more than a dull interim occupant of the top post in the USSR. Not even Soviet historians could make a war hero of a man who spent the war years far from the front line as a party secretary in Krasnoyarsk, then as a student at a higher party school in Moscow. As the party's chief propagandist in Moldavia when Leonid Brezhnev was First Secretary of the republic from 1950 to 1952, Chernenko developed the valuable contact which eventually brought him in 1956 to Moscow as chief of the sector for " mass agitation work " in the Central Committee Propaganda Department. He was promoted to higher posts in the Central Committee apparatus, dealing with personnel matters as a close assistant to Leonid Brezhnev and becoming head of the crucial policy-making General Department in 1965, shortly after Brezhnev replaced Nikita Khrushchev.

Chernenko was elected a full member of the Central Committee in 1971 and was appointed Secretary responsible for party administration and security five years later. By 1978 he was a full member of the Politburo and gradually emerged as Brezhnev's close companion and chosen successor. Yet he made no original policy statements and was never an impressive speaker. Even with the stultifying boredom of Kremlin speeches, his contributions won him a reputation for crushing dullness and stumbling presentation which his funeral oration for President Andropov did nothing to dispel.

The new leader has shown no expertise in economic matters and has little experience of foreign affairs. His speech on 13 February accepting the post of general secretary reiterated such stock policy phrases as " peaceful coexistence " with capitalist states – a concept " bequeathed by the great Lenin " who in fact applied it to Soviet relations with the independent Baltic states later incorporated into the USSR by Stalin. Chernenko attacked the " reckless adventurist actions of imperialism's aggressive forces " and promised to strengthen Soviet " defence capacity." He denied any intention on the part of the USSR to impose its will on other countries, but confirmed that the policy of socialist internationalism would continue. No change in Soviet repression in Afghanistan and Eastern Europe seemed likely to emerge from this stand-pat attitude.

YURII Vladimirovich Andropov died as he lived: shrouded in secrecy. A medical bulletin released on the following day stated that he died at 16:50 Moscow time on Thursday 9 February of " heart and respiratory failure." No announcement of his death appeared the next morning in the Soviet press: *Pravda* carried on the front page a long editorial report on efforts by the CPSU Central Committee and the Council of Ministers to improve output of consumer goods. President Andropov was fleetingly mentioned in a separate appeal to young voters in preparation for the Supreme Soviet elections in March. It claimed: " Young men and women, like the whole Soviet people, unanimously approve the measures of the party aimed at further strengthening discipline, order and good organization and at fulfilling pressing current and future tasks."

The first public indication that a Politburo member had died was the change from the advertised programmes on Moscow Radio to the playing of solemn music. Not until Friday afternoon did the Soviet population learn that another general secretary had passed into history, only 15 months after the funeral of Leonid Brezhnev. The medical bulletin signed among others by the head of the Fourth Chief Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Health, Academician Evgenii Chazov, said that Andropov had suffered from fluctuations of blood pressure and diabetes, complicated by chronic kidney trouble which had required dialysis treatment since February 1983. The treatment " had ensured a satisfactory condition and ability to work " (*Pravda*, 11 February 1984).

The same Professor Chazov, who has a watching brief over the health of the Kremlin leaders, prepared the post-mortem report on Leonid Brezhnev (see *Pravda*, 12 November 1982) revealing that he had died of a sudden heart attack. Brezhnev had arteriosclerosis of the aorta and had earlier suffered several heart attacks. This is an extraordinary approach to providing the population with information about the health of their leader; the extent of his decrepitude is revealed only after death. Andropov had not been seen in public since 18 August 1983. Officials repeatedly assured Western diplomats that he would soon be back on the scene, having recovered from his " cold." When President Andropov missed the December Plenum, his report, delivered *in absentia*, began: " Dear Comrades! Because of temporary causes I shall not be able to attend . . ." (*Pravda*, 27 December 1983). He nonetheless automatically received far more nominations to stand for " election " to the Supreme Soviet in March than any other leader.

ANDROPOV'S death came when the party leadership, from Politburo to Central Committee, was undergoing a process of reorganization to strengthen the Andropov faction and weed out the potentially disloyal, the obviously geriatric, the particularly ineffectual and the especially corrupt. Of the 12 full voting members of the Politburo, seven were in their seventieth year or older. But under Andropov the number of younger men in the top bodies had increased, and men such as Gorbachev

and Romanov cannot be expected to wait patiently until their seventies to reach the top posts.

The voting members of the Politburo included Mikhail Gorbachev, 52, Grigorii Romanov, 61 (both also in the Secretariat) and Vitaly Vorotnikov, 58. Among the six non-voting candidate members were Vladimir Dolgikh, 59 (also in the Secretariat), Eduard Shevardnadze, 56, and Vladimir Chebrikov, 60. In addition to the three secretaries mentioned above the ten-man Secretariat included the younger Nikolai Ryzhkov, 54, and Egor Ligachev, 63. It seems probable that because of the advanced age of the present general secretary the other Soviet leaders will devote a disproportionate amount of their time to promoting their own careers rather than concentrating on the economic and social problems of the USSR.

To some Soviet citizens this may appear to be no way to run a superpower. Apart from the obvious dangers of poor leadership in moments of crisis, amply illustrated by the Korean airliner tragedy, the perennial problems of social discontent and falling economic growth rates increasingly seem to require more dynamic action at the top. The oft-repeated claim that " the whole Soviet people unanimously approves the domestic and foreign policies of the party and government " can only strike more and more people as an empty and arrant nonsense. But there is a widespread passive acceptance of the regime, based partly on knowledge of the state's repressive power, partly on slowly, but steadily rising living standards. This perceived improvement in the life of the average family can, however, no longer be assured, as economic growth falters and real purchasing power shrinks. The passivity of the population may have its limits.

Chernenko and Andropov: Ideological Perspectives

Dora Sturman

THERE is no end to the discussion in the Western press about what we can expect from the Soviet leadership after Andropov. Under these circumstances, it makes sense to listen to what has been said about the future of the USSR by Yurii Andropov and his opponent and erstwhile rival, Konstantin Chernenko.

When Stalin died, the new leaders made odious accusations revealing (as though they had not been aware of them before) scandalous shortcomings in the legacy that they had inherited, and they levelled charges against Stalin for the terrible crimes committed in the Party and state, past and present.

When Khrushchev was sent into retirement, his successors turned their accusatory monologues against him.

Yurii Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko in their programme speeches at the CPSU Central Committee Plenum of June 1983 did not directly name anyone responsible for the difficulties in the cumbersome machine that they had inherited from the previous general secretary; but in actual fact they blamed not only Brezhnev, who had just died, for these difficulties, but also Khrushchev who had been ousted in 1964.

THE Party programme, adopted in 1961 at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU under Khrushchev, proposed that the material and technical base for communism in the USSR be built by 1980. This was the plan: the Khrushchev programme gave a detailed account of the material and technical base of communism and each point in it was given precise quantitative indices. The discussion was not about the building of *mature* communism: according to the classic theory, the latter suggests the absence (the " withering away ") of the state, that is the administrative, distributive, state security and police, military, and other institutions not being separated from productive labour. Khrushchev did not believe that this would be achieved in capitalist surroundings which were hostile to socialism. But even under these circumstances he considered it possible to build the economic prerequisites for an earthly paradise—to create an unprecedented communist abundance. Evidently, he could not comprehend why the " most progressive order "—socialism—with such excellent possibilities for production (due to nationalization, planning and its scientific character), should not be able to achieve an output surpassing the economic level achieved by the developed countries of the West in conditions of the self-same international antagonisms. Lenin also could not understand this. From 1921–22 until March 1923 he endlessly reiterated that the Party and the working classes, even though they have

at their disposal all economic reserves and all scientific forces, suffer defeat in competition with free enterprise only because of a lack of management skills, incompetence and traditional Russian *Oblomovshchina*. Lenin believed that the solution to this problem was to create unprecedented economic development in the country, based on nationalizing the economy and a legal monopoly for the Bolshevik party—NEP was only a temporary diversion from this magisterial path. He died at the dawn of the socialist experiment and he did not come close to an understanding of the true possibilities and impossibilities for a nationalized monopolistically directed economy. Khrushchev inherited his faith and his illusions with 40 years' practical experience of a centrally-planned economy behind him. But this experience did not make him any more perceptive.

Stalin built his economic, agricultural and industrial policy for the most part on coercion. This coercion, and the terror accompanying it, seemed unnecessary to Khrushchev, not justified by objective conditions and to a large extent due only to Stalin's character. Khrushchev decided to offer the people better relations with the authorities in exchange for good work and to stimulate the intelligentsia, in conditions of far greater freedom than under Stalin, finally to exploit scientifically all the advantages of the socialist system. Khrushchev was absolutely unaware that even a relative "thaw," just taking away the threat of death for free thought, would suddenly cause Soviet scientists (liberalization also brought numerous translations from Western languages) to conclude that most of the advantages expected from the socialist economy were absent. Indeed, Khrushchev was the last Kremlin "*vozhd*'" who, at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s, still believed in the practically infinite economic possibilities of the Soviet order. During his 18-year rule Brezhnev openly defied Khrushchev's 20-year plan for achieving communist superabundance. Under Brezhnev the programme began simply to be ignored. It was reported in the Russian *émigré* press that in 1981 two people in Balashov had dug out of the ground a hermatically-sealed container which they had buried in 1961 and which held a newspaper with the text of this programme. In the presence of a few people they read out its main points and tried to compare what had been planned for 1980 with what had actually been achieved. Their case was heard *in camera* and they each were sentenced to a number of years in a camp, according to Article 190 of the RSFSR Criminal Code, for "spreading fabrications and defaming the Soviet social and state order."

It would seem, somehow, that it is desirable to correct a situation in which reading aloud the Party programme is equivalent to mocking the Party and its programme. Towards the end of Brezhnev's rule, in May 1982, a paltry Food Programme was introduced, which promised to feed the population by 1990 (!) without resorting to the importation of major food products. However, not so that it was completely sated: in certain products (meat, vegetables, fruit, eggs) the consumption norms planned in this programme for the time of its completion turned out to be

lower even than the so-called scientifically based norms officially accepted in the USSR.

It was not Brezhnev who was blamed at the June 1983 Party Plenum for the total failure during the Brezhnev era of the 1961 Party programme*, but, and quite rightly, it was this Utopian document. Mentioning the now rescinded programme in but a few words, Andropov noted in passing that " several of its points—and this should be directly stated—did not withstand the test of time in full measure, as they contained elements of a divorce from reality, of putting the cart before the horse, of unwarranted specificity."

Thus the blame was put not on Brezhnev, but on Khrushchev, who inspired this unrealistic programme.

In circumstances where promises made by the authorities to the people have not been kept for almost 70 years, an ideologically expedient Party programme should not be concrete and chronologically specific, so that these promises are not liable to precise verification. To judge from the materials of the June 1983 Plenum, the new programme will have just one unambiguous quality: it will not contain any inspiringly grandiose and final tasks for the period at hand; a programme of impoverished goals, of lowered ideological spirit in everything that concerns the daily *internal* activities of the Party and the nation. Grandiosity is preserved only in external goals, about which a bit further on.

The present stage of development of the USSR is defined in Andropov's and Chernenko's speeches as " the stage of developed socialism."

" The Party programme must in present circumstances be first and foremost a programme of the planned and comprehensive achievement of mature socialism and," said the late General Secretary—this was italicized for emphasis—" this means also the further advancement towards communism." He mentioned nothing more about communism for, like Chernenko, he repeatedly underlined the fact that the stage of the " achievement of mature socialism " will be prolonged.

But for how long?

The resolution adopted at the June 1983 Plenum resounded with these striking words: " The collective thought of the CPSU has enriched scientific socialism with its teachings about developed socialism. The Party has determined that Soviet society finds itself *at the beginning* of this historically long period " (my emphasis).

What a surprising admission! This " *at the beginning* " which neither the late General Secretary, nor the chief Party ideologue wanted to voice on his own account, frees not only the present generation of tenacious Kremlin gerontocrats, but also their successors in this and the next century, of the necessity to achieve " the material and technical base of communism " in the foreseeable future. Chernenko expressed this forcefully when he criticized the once current " light-weight understanding of the paths and dates of the transition to the higher phase of

* See *Survey*, No. 38, October 1961, pp. 12–28.

communism." And he added: " Hastening, so to speak, *our dream*, some theoreticians and propagandists have seemingly ' ironed ' out the bumps in the road along which we are going . . ." (my emphasis).

Thus, what had for 22 years been the " scientific " programme of the CPSU was suddenly transformed into something ephemeral and vague—into " our dream." And what can you expect from a dream?

THE socialism of the present Soviet model had its major features formed by the mid-1930s, after the destruction of the independent peasantry and the completion of the first stages of industrialization. Half a century has passed since the time when Stalin announced that socialism had been built. And this is only the beginning now?! Even the idea of building just the economic prerequisites for communism in one country has practically been dropped. Of course, this is not openly declared, but from everything that was uttered at the Plenum it is clear that it will be " mature socialism " and not communism that will try to win the world. In both their speeches and in the resolution the accent is irrefutably on " the intensity and sharpness of the struggle between two diametrically opposite world views, between two courses—socialism and imperialism " (Andropov). Placing the emphasis on the ideological duel, the late General Secretary nevertheless noted more than once that the outcome of the duel also depends entirely on the state of the economy, of the sciences, engineering and technology of the USSR, on its " defence capabilities," i.e. on its armaments and its fighting efficiency. One thing is clear: both Andropov and Chernenko are to a significant extent concerned with the dissemination of the ideology, and that means of the practice, of " developed socialism " throughout the whole world. " There is a battle being fought for the hearts and minds of millions of people on this planet," Andropov said, and he was neither joking nor exaggerating. The thesis that " developed socialism " is fighting and must fight an uncompromising battle for millions of minds on this planet—for all of humanity—is emphasized and constantly reiterated in various ways in the materials of the Plenum.

When saying things *at length* it is very difficult not to let out the undesirable truth, as can be seen in the following remark by Andropov:

> Our key task in the economic sphere is the *cardinal raising of productive labour* [italics in the original]. We must strive to achieve the highest world level on this score. Indeed, it was not without good reason that Lenin considered this the major and most important task, in the final analysis, for the victory of the new social order. (*Works*, vol. 39, p. 21.)

And further on he spoke about the paramount necessity " to overcome the lagging behind in areas such as agriculture, transport and the service industries." He mentioned the splendid prospect of

> the automation of production, . . . the use of computers and robots, the introduction of software technology, . . . the employment of the

> newest atomic reactors, . . . the development of biotechnology . . . of non-wasteful and energy-saving technology. All this will lead to a genuine revolution in our national economy.

But he also noted:

> Unfortunately, comrades, as you know, it so happens that as yet things are not going well with the realization of our scientific and technical achievements.

It would thus appear from these chronically soiled clichés of Party programmatic speeches (the areas of lagging behind have been repeatedly enumerated and are still the same ones as in the 1960s) that the task set in 1983, as something *new* and *crucial*, was laid down by Lenin in 1919 and has not been accomplished in 66 years!

However, Lenin, Stalin and Khrushchev repeatedly spoke about the need to catch up and *overtake* the world level of labour productivity. Andropov speaks about the " key task " being the need to " strive to *achieve* the world level!" Just to " strive " and only to " achieve."

In these circumstances, the prime interpretation of socialism as an order which is *by definition* more productive than capitalism has been stripped of all meaning. The USSR lags behind in all areas which are flourishing in the West and which were enumerated by Andropov drawing from Western experience. Moreover, according to well-substantiated Western analyses, a substantial part of the USSR's technological innovations has been procured through the import of technology and through scientific and industrial espionage in the West and in Japan.

Andropov's " strive to achieve " thus implicitly admits socialism's second-rate status in terms of the economy, production, science and technology.

Andropov was also very cautious about the agricultural potential of " developed socialism." He said about the Food Programme:

> It is especially necessary to set into motion the uninterrupted supply of foodstuffs of the highest quality, and moreover in such a way as to achieve *maximum possible self-sufficiency* in this respect (my emphasis).

Please note: not full self-sufficiency, but maximum possible non-reliance on imports. Even in fulfilling the Food Programme, the importation of food (which has grown 40 times in the past 10 years) will remain in some measure the lot of the power richest in natural resources in the world.

" The contraction and simplification of the ruling apparatus " also is posed as a problem by Andropov, a problem which " Lenin had already stressed." And he also does not raise the question of why, now that more than 60 years have passed since Lenin's retirement from work due to ill health, this task which was formulated by him has by no means lost its topical interest.

Marxism proclaims itself most categorically as the outcome of " socialism's development from a Utopia to a science," yet the late General

Secretary of the Leninist Party openly pronounced what must be the most paradoxical words for the authorities, claiming a scientific basis for their policies:

> . . . if we are to speak frankly, not even now have we sufficient learning about the society in which we live and work, we have not fully uncovered the laws inherent in it, especially the economic laws. Therefore, we are at times forced to act, so to speak, empirically, in a quite irrational manner of trial and error.

The method of trial and error can be sufficiently rational if the trial is made freely, within an adequately broad compass, and the mistakes are stated in time, with honesty and full freedom of discussion.

In the first speech upon his " enthronement " (at the CPSU Central Committee Plenum of November 1982), Andropov stated that he had no ready remedies for raising the productivity of the socialist economy and that one must study and put to use the best internal and world experience. These words of his evoked a splash of optimism among Sovietologists: Andropov is a pragmatist, *au courant* with Soviet malaise, and will proceed to introduce saving changes in the economy; has he not admitted his own lack of ready remedies for optimising socialism and spoken not only of internal, but also of *world* experience? And so illusions then sprang up that the new General Secretary would allow scientists to place on his desk their uncensored pronouncements about the true level of productivity of the economic system under socialism, and on really effective ways of optimizing it.

In the past 30 years, " allowing limited autonomy " to a number of enterprises has been repeatedly undertaken, but in the end it has always led to nothing but an increase in disorder. In the USSR the competitive market, which essentially still governs the activities of Western firms and farms, does not exist. When a powerful Western concern wants to increase the autonomy of its affiliates, it discontinues some of its own links with them and they plug straight into the market. Where the market does not exist, the links no longer connected to the state regulating mechanism will for a time flap about in the wind, increasing disorder, and will thereupon reconnect with that very mechanism, the only genuinely commanding regulator in the system.

In order for this not to happen, one must change the system in principle. Yet, Andropov, while calling on science to overcome the inadequacies of the socialist economy, at the same time demanded that the scientists comply with two conditions: that science " must base itself on the enduring theoretical foundation of Marxism–Leninism " and must be answerable to " the principles and conditions of developed socialism." In other words, everything must basically remain unchanged, in spite of the fact that in the 69 years of its pre-history (1848–1917) and the 66 years of its history (1917–83) the " enduring Marxist–Leninist foundation " of the Soviet order has been unable to work out the basis for a sufficiently effective socialist economy. Andropov himself spoke about this, and

was by no means the first to do so. The trouble is that there does not exist any sort of "Marxist–Leninist theoretical foundation" capable of ensuring the effectiveness of the Soviet economy on the level of a developed Western economy. It is only stringent dogmatism that foists a specific structure on the economy. This structure permits its dictatorial rulers to spend at will the lion's share of the national product on goals which they consider most important (preserving the system's permanence, their place in it and their considerable privileges; ideological and military expansion, armaments, etc.). Since the system is huge and is endowed with rich natural resources, this share is very big. But to the extent that the system as a whole has a poor level of effectiveness, in comparison with structures of similar size and natural wealth but organized on different lines, it suffers chronic deficiencies in every sphere, apart from those set aside by the government as being of paramount importance to it. These deficiencies are steadily increasing and are having an undesirable impact also on the spheres patronized by the government, and even on the stability of the system itself.

Hence the usual and persistent cry of appeal to the Soviet scientists (and such it was even at the beginning of the 1920s under Lenin, at the beginning of the 1960s under Khrushchev and after his ouster in the mid-1960s): "As we all know Marxism is a science! Then, damn you, give us finally the scientific recommendations for operating this scientifically set up machine at full strength!"

Hence too the rulers' cry from Chernenko's lips: "... assistance to the Party on the part of the scientific departments could have been more fundamental." And the notable reference to the past (about which more later):

> I shall mention a specific example. We had anticipated much from the Institute for Sociological Studies and the Central Institute of Mathematics and Economics of the Academy of Sciences, which had been set up already in the 1960s. But even now our expectations have not been satisfied with detailed and specific findings about social phenomena and actual economic problems.

Anyone observing relations in the 1960s between official economic science and the government had a recurring sense of the circular movement of both science and of the Central Committee that directs it along a closed trajectory, perpetually going round and reverting to things that have a familiar ring and yet have not taken place. Let us return for a moment to this circular track without exit that Chernenko recalled—to the era of SOFE.

ACADEMICIAN N.P. Fedorenko, director of the Central Institute of Economics and Mathematics of the USSR Academy of Sciences (TsEMI), chairman of several committees on the Union level associated with mathematical methods of economic management, came out in the specialist and popular press in 1968 with the propaganda of SOFE

(System of Optimal Functioning of the Economy) which had been developed by his institute. In his words: " Economic science acquires colossal significance in conditions of socialism," since socialist society " *is the product of science*, the embodiment of the ideals of revolutionaries who were in possession of the theories of scientific socialism." Having affirmed the paramount role of science in the emergence of socialism, the Academician writes:

> It is true that one cannot as yet say that theory forestalls practice by a long way in economics, as is the case, for example, in physics or mathematics, *as it is supposed to be in any science that has gained maturity*.
>
> Economic science, operating within general formulations, has over a lengthy period given no *precise premises* to the practical aspect of working out quantitative methods for studying the processes at play in the socialist economy (my emphasis).

As can be seen, Academician Fedorenko was saying in 1968 what Andropov and Chernenko were saying about Marxist economic science in 1983. But, Academician N.P. Fedorenko affirmed that

> Scientific investigations carried out in the past two to three years in the field in question allow one to formulate and establish the initial premises for a complex mechanism for the economic functioning of socialism, to select the areas most important for elaborating a system of optimal planning and national economic management in the country.

In the same year, N. Moiseyev, corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, wrote about socialist economic management:

> Nation-wide systematic coordination of research activities is a necessity. And above all one must expand the theoretical study *of the very principles of management. We are astonishingly ignorant in this area!* When we are set the question of how to direct a space-ship, we know which feed-back system to use, what kind of distortion of information is permissible, etc. But in discussion of a system of branch or factory management, we are not able to answer a single question of a similar type. Is it a good or a bad thing to inspect the plan once a year? How long should the permitted periods for re-working the information be, and so on and so forth. We can only make guesses here. *We do not even have the criteria for evaluating a management system* (my emphasis).[1]

In October 1968, Academician V. I. Trapeznikov, in a report to the All-Union Conference on Automation and Telemechanics in Tbilisi, said:

> Our command of the methods and means of management of technological objectives is not bad, but in the sphere of management of large complexes, organizational systems, sometimes known

[1] See the article " Vremya kustarnichat' proshlo " (The time for amateurism is over), in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 11, 1968.

> conventionally as big systems, we are essentially *only just beginning our work* (my emphasis).

If genuinely serious work on the principles of the functioning of the Soviet socialist system and its optimization began many years ago, why is it now asserted that this work has not produced any substantial results?

It is because this work has been conducted officially in the " governmental offices " of Soviet science, and its findings, conclusions and resolutions have always been kept within a rigid framework. One is not allowed to say that socialism has no advantages over capitalism from the point of view of the national economy, rather than of the Partocratic goals of the government: this has always been the case. In 1922, Lenin wrote to someone who had tried to single out for him *general* defects of *principle* in the Soviet governmental machine: ". . . I also find you guilty of pessimism *with regard to Soviet power* " (*Works*, Vol. 29, p. 415, document 207).

In Lenin's own time it was not possible to aspire to a principled, however well-meaning, criticism of the regime, and 60 years later Chernenko is saying:

> *And most important:* the social sciences must be guided unswervingly by revolutionary theory, they must skilfully adopt the tested Marxist–Leninist methodology of scientific research. Of course, new facts can make it necessary *to supplement and clarify the tenets that have been laid down. But, there exist truths which are not subject to revision, problems that were solved long ago and without further ramifications* . . . (my emphasis).

The fact that such " resolutions " solve none of the tasks set before science to achieve the optimization of the socialist economy is neither here nor there. It is impossible to step out of the constraints of these all-too-uniform resolutions which are worth nothing *from the point of view of national interests*. One is only allowed to " define them more precisely " and " supplement " them. The speaker makes special reference to the prohibition of any re-evaluation of the collectivization of the peasantry, addressing his warning to economists as well as writers. Just try and conduct " scientific research " under such conditions! . . .

In the aforementioned report of 1968, Academician Trapeznikov speaks about an analysis of the Soviet system of management from the point of view of general principles for the functioning of so-called " big," or " complex " systems. Along this route in the 1960s hurried Soviet academics, whose works, the sub-text as much as the text, were visibly permeated with socio-systemic analogies. Many systemic research papers in those years were translated from foreign languages. In the 1970s, the lawful possibilities for such writings in the USSR had been practically exhausted. SOFE—a complex project of optimization of the socialist economy carried out at the end of the 1960s by TsEMI AN SSSR (the institute that received a sharp reprimand from Chernenko at the Central Committee Plenum in June 1983)—reached deadlock.

In order not to step out of the permitted framework, the system of optimal functioning of the economy (SOFE) had to remain centralized and bound to a single economic plan. It was absolutely necessary for that single plan to be constructed on a single criterion of good—the criterion of optimization. The classic literature of socialism, including Marxism, presupposes that this criterion will take into consideration and reflect the good " of society as a whole and of each its individual members."

They tried to abide by this principle in SOFE. But it transpired that they had relied on the socialist calculation that without the free market, where each individual applies his own criteria while the general criterion is determined statistically, it is impossible to work out such an indicator. The initiators of SOFE conceded this point in print. In his book *Kiberneticheskie problemy upravlenie ekonomikoi* (The Mechanical Problems of Economic Management) (Moscow, 1974), Fedorenko's deputy at TsEMI, N. Ya. Petrakov, draws the following picture:

At the highest level of the system, " economics " works out the global criterion for optimization which is necessary to all other levels (enterprises, departments, branches). This criterion runs from top to bottom, so that at each level the adjoining criterion of optimization will follow on from the higher instance. The author concludes that

> . . . a criterion of optimization of the economic system may be introduced only on the basis of an analysis *of the entire aggregate of social relations in the socio-economic formation as a whole* (my emphasis).

Then, stressing well-intentioned arguments for the participation of all Soviet society in the elaboration of such a criterion, Petrakov concludes:

> All that has been said above gives us the basis to propose that in defining the axioms of optimal planning and management, the precept of the presence of an economic criterion for optimization must be augmented with that of *the* a priori *indefinability of this criterion* (my emphasis).

The reason for this indefinability is encapsulated in the impossibility of investigating in a realistic amount of time each occasion when confronted with the setting and correcting of the plan " the complete totality of social relations." It is a highly complex, dynamic, constantly drifting and flowing, in all its elements, " socio-economic formation as a whole." But without a well-founded global criterion of optimization the plan will be unaccountable. It remains either to insist on a change in the system, to include genuine competitive market self-organization, or to work in the service of purely mercenary and arbitrary criteria used by the controllers of Soviet science.

THE chief demand in both leaders' speeches and in the concluding remarks at the June 1983 Plenum was to increase by all available means the ideological and disciplinary pressure on all strata of the

population, steadfastly to bring under control not only their working, but also their leisure time.

In so far as no changes are foreseen in the structural principles of economic production relations, the decisive improvements which have been acknowledged to be necessary are to be expected from concentrated pressure on the citizens' ideology, morality and discipline, from their readiness and ability to start working harder than before.

A complete programme was developed in Chernenko's speech of subjection of citizens of all ages and types to state and Party demands. It starts with directing the majority of schoolchildren to study in a PTU (professional and technical college), rather than the 9th and 10th forms, with the order to young people " to work where society today demands them to," and not just where they feel like it; it goes through all strata of society and concludes with a plea that they should be attentive to the slightest appearances of alien ideology and react against them swiftly. Included among those generating ideology hostile to " developed socialism " are not only Western radio stations, but also " certain writers " who " permit a diversion from historical truth in, for example, their evaluation of collectivization," who drag into print " Godseeking themes, depicting all kinds of miserable wretches," exhibiting a " non-standard " interpretation of their fate and that of Soviet history and, as a result, distorting Soviet reality and influencing the reader in a negative fashion. Chernenko demands that " all collectives of journals and publishing houses be more decisive in their interception of unprincipled, conciliatory and subjectivist predilictions."

As in the good old Stalinist times, the ideological approach extends even to popular music. Chernenko refers with hostility to " musical ensembles whose repertoires are of a dubious nature," causing " ideological and aesthetic harm " to young people.

A double-page newspaper spread enumerated the ideological, propaganda and educational tasks of the day and at the same time urgently proposed that " measures of economic, organizational and legal order " be sought out quickly for " the most energetic struggle against drunkenness, hooliganism and parasitism, speculation and the theft of state property, bribery and corruption," for the raising at leaps and bounds of the citizens' labour and personal discipline. Such are the essential tasks of " developed socialism."

It is worth noting that Chernenko refrained from seeing in the shortcomings listed above " only vestiges of the past in the consciousness and behaviour of the people," the old standard ideological formula for explaining Soviet social misbehaviour. " The reasons for many ' sores ' should also be sought in contemporary experience," he said. Exactly where, he does not make clear.

AT the foundation of Marxist historical materialism lies the conviction that being determines consciousness, that ideology is determined by factors relating to the base, above all by production and economic factors.

But the Kremlin elders, like all their predecessors, place the " superstructure " before the " base "—ideology before production and economic relations. Faced with blatant systemic irrationality in the " base," which they nonetheless do not wish to change, they have nothing upon which to pin their hopes, other than ideology and coercion. The faintness of the first hope—ideology—is self-evident. And what does the escalation of coercion hold in store?

ANDROPOV'S speech at the Central Committee Plenum on 26 December 1983 was not spoken by him in person, but was read out in his absence.

At the time of his fatal illness, Lenin distributed to various Party and Soviet meetings the texts of his addresses and speeches. The invisible General Secretary was now behaving in the same way. Andropov would not have ventured such a risky method of ruling the country and the Party had there not been a very good reason for it. Even Lenin with his enormous authority was isolated, and his instructions ignored by his comrades-in-arms, when it became clear that his condition was hopeless. Recall how Brezhnev, a few days before his death, gasped for breath as he climbed on to the Mausoleum, utterly enfeebled. Andropov was unable to overcome his illness even if only for the sake of appearances. Rumours circulated in Moscow and abroad that he was partially paralyzed, that he was on a kidney-machine, and so forth, giving rise to a caustic Radio Armenia joke:

Question: " Will Andropov survive until 1984?"

Answer: " Only partially . . ."

The gravely ill General Secretary continued to rule with the aid of typed speeches, telephones and meetings with selected individuals. In his message to the Plenum, Andropov noted several successes in comparison with the very inauspicious year of 1982. But, basically, the tasks put forward are the same as those at the June Plenum, and the major method for their solution remains the stimulation of popular enthusiasm and patriotism, the strengthening of production discipline and the raising of norms and planning tasks. There is no indication that the authorities, heeding the voices of scientists and industrialists, have decided on authentic decentralization of economic decision-making. What is more, some resolutions made changing jobs extraordinarily difficult.

In the politico-ideological sphere, the sense of an ever-increasing military threat from the USA and " international Zionism " has been boosted purposefully by the press, by other organs of mass communication and by Party propagandists. The regime has become harsher for political prisoners in prisons and camps. To Article 188 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR has been added a third clause, according to which the prison administration can *without trial* increase by an additional one to five years the length of term in prison or camp for those prisoners whom it considers unruly. Not even Stalin gave such powers to his prison administration. The number of prosecutions and the level of repression

against dissidents is growing. They have even started making arrests for the practice of Hinduism and yoga. A supplement was introduced to Article 198:2 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, stipulating up to three years' labour camp for individuals who had " wilfully " left the place of residence allocated to them following release from a previous term of imprisonment.

It is unlikely that such an energetic tightening of the screws could have taken place without Andropov's *imprimatur*. But in any case the late General Secretary's age and illness set a natural limit to his authority. It is now Chernenko's turn further to implement the broad lines of policy on which both were essentially in agreement, in spite of certain differences.

ANDROPOV'S and Chernenko's speeches testify that there is not even a hint of liberalization in principles, and that a tightening up, both ideological and disciplinary, will occur; it is already under way. But this is just a palliative; essentially it will produce no new results, and probably there will be no total enforcement of it. Today, it is impossible not to take into account first the changing state of society—the extinction of illusions, be they ever so microscopic, which at the time had helped Stalin enforce total coercion; second, the high cost and, in the last analysis, even the ineffectiveness of such coercion, especially in present technological conditions; third, that total coercion always produces a chain reaction and is no less dangerous for the higher (those around and immediately below the leader) and the middle links of the system, than it is for the masses. The terror will remain selective. Optimists regarding future reforms should note that this selective terror is not weakening and foreign policy is not becoming moderate and restrained. Brutal police searches of the apartments of " inconvenient " people, additional labour camp sentences for dissidents who have finished serving their time, almost total prohibition on emigration from the USSR, fiercer persecution of religious believers, the law on labour collectives, new decrees and local decisions making transfer from one job to another virtually impossible—all these are sufficient illustration of domestic trends in the Soviet Union today. They will continue under Chernenko, as they did under Andropov.

Growing foreign policy expansion—in its military, diplomatic, ideological, intelligence and terrorist aspects—will induce increasing internal strain for the regime. Each new foreign success will turn out to be more expensive than the last, in terms of internal economic deterioration. But the system's reserves, and that means durability too, are great.

The regime will survive and will try to extend further over the planet, sustained by domestic palliatives of various kinds and by leaching from the outside world all those things without which it could not preserve unaltered for long its propensities and structure. Is there perhaps a chance that it will be blocked from the outside, with no injections of grain, credits, technical supplies and technological know-how?

That would certainly be a fantastical turn of events.

Translated by Teresa Cherfas

Andropov: Myths and Realities*

Amy W. Knight

SOVIET leaders, with the possible exception of Khrushchev, have generally presented an inscrutable countenance to outside observers. The closed, secretive nature of the Soviet style of government and the total censorship of the press allow only the barest details on the men in the Kremlin to be made known publicly. The main sources of information—official biographies, the daily Soviet press and the seemingly inexhaustible Moscow rumour mill—have always left many unanswered questions and contradictory impressions about the Soviet leadership. Yet in no case did the techniques of Western Sovietology prove so strikingly deficient as in that of Brezhnev's successor, Yurii Andropov. After Andropov first attracted Western attention as a contender for Brezhnev's post, he emerged as the Kremlin's mystery man *par excellence*. A plethora of speculative writings yielded a portrait of him as a complex, enigmatic figure surrounded by a distinct aura of romanticism. He was described as a sophisticated intellectual with liberal inclinations, far more intelligent and enlightened than his Kremlin colleagues. Yet, he had presided over one of the world's most repressive police forces for 15 years. This seeming contradiction aroused the fascination of the West and led many to expect new approaches to foreign and domestic policy.

Now that Andropov is dead, it is clear, as it should have been all along, that these expectations were misguided and that he was not as different from his other colleagues as had been thought by so many. The picture of Andropov that emerged in his time as Party leader becomes less surprising when one takes a thorough look at the facts surrounding his life and career. Andropov had, after all, 47 years of Party and government service behind him before he became General Secretary. While his brief official biographies tell us little about these years, it is possible to glean more information by examining Soviet Party histories, memoirs and biographies of persons who served with Andropov, and his own published articles and speeches that span his career. What emerges is far from a definitive picture of Brezhnev's successor and Chernenko's predeccesor, but it may offer a more solid foundation for assessing his character and the significance of his accession to the top Party leadership post.

Andropov's Early Years

Andropov's humble origins and early background offer little probability to support the image of a sophisticated intellectual from whom we might have expected, if not a more liberal approach to the problems of

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governing the Soviet Union, then at least a more enlightened one. He was born on 15 June 1914 at a small railway settlement called Nagutsk Station in what is now the Stavropol District of the RSFSR, located in the North Caucasus.[1] His father was an office employee of the railway. In 1930, at the age of 16, Andropov left school and moved to the city of Mozdok, south of Stavropol in the North Ossetin Autonomous Republic. There he took a job as a telegraph worker and later as a cinema operator's assistant. He entered the Komsomol in 1930.

Somewhat later, Andropov became a sailor on the Volga, where his travels took him to Rybinsk, in the Yaroslav Oblast of the RSFSR. Located at the junction of the Volga and the Mariinskiy Canal System, Rybinsk was and still is an important river port, with many shipbuilding and repair yards. From 1932 to 1936, Andropov attended the Rybinsk Technical School for Water Transport, presumably while still holding down a job. In 1936, after finishing his course at the water transport school, Andropov became Komsomol organizer of the school and then an organizer for the All-Union Komsomol Central Committee at the Volodarsk Shipyard in Rybinsk.[2] The following year, Andropov was elected a Secretary of the Yaroslav Oblast Komsomol and in 1938, at the age of only 24, he became First Secretary of the Yaroslav Komsomol.

Andropov's rapid rise in the Komsomol apparatus coincided with a purge of the Komsomol which was initiated by the Fourth Plenum of the Komsomol Central Committee and lasted from approximately September 1937 to the late spring of 1938. Although the Komsomol was not as hard hit as the regular Party apparatus, most of its upper cadres were wiped out. The rank and file suffered relatively less, and in 1938 the Party initiated strong efforts to bring as many Komsomolites as possible into its ranks. Approximately 320,000 members of the Komsomol were promoted by March 1939, including Andropov, who kept his position as First Secretary of the Yaroslav Obkom Komsomol.[3] Thus, like most of his political colleagues, Andropov was a direct beneficiary of the purges. His relative youth and the fact that he was in the Komsomol rather than the Party during the height of the purges no doubt helped to ensure his own survival. But survival and rapid promotion at this time also required considerable political skill.

Like most Komsomolites, Andropov appears to have been caught up in the fervour of the purges that characterized political activities at this time. A short article by Andropov, presumably one of his first publications, which appeared in a Komsomol journal in 1938 offers testimony to his

[1] Biographical information on Andropov can be found in *Sovetskaya voennaya entsiklopediya*, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1976), p. 193; *Bolshaya sovetskaya entsiklopediya*, 3rd ed., Vol. 2 (Moscow, 1970), p. 23; and *Deputaty verkhovnogo soveta SSSR. desyatyi sozyv* (Moscow, 1979), p. 28. Among the recent books that have come out in the West on Andropov, the most balanced account is that of Zhores A. Medvedev, *Andropov* (W. W. Norton, New York & London, 1983), see p. 61.

[2] Andrei Kirilenko graduated from the Rybinsk Aviation Institute in the same year, but there is no evidence that he knew Andropov then.

[3] On the purge of the Komsomol, see Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Permanent Purge. Soviet Politics in Soviet Totalitarianism* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1956), pp. 94–95.

political zeal.[4] The article, entitled " Protect Youth from the Pernicious Influence of Churchmen and Members of Religious Sects," was a call to Komsomol workers to rout out religion in the Yaroslav Oblast' by means of an all-out " Bolshevik-style struggle " against religious institutions. Andropov was apparently responsible for this campaign, for he discussed in detail the shortcomings of various Komsomol organizations in their anti-religious work and gave examples of religious groups that had been uncovered in villages and *kolkhozi*, including a nun who was trying to organize a convent. According to Andropov, " the counter-revolutionary churchmen and sectarian leaders " were, " together with Trotskyite-Bukharinite spies, using religious believers for their evil aims of harming socialist construction in every way possible."[5]

An interesting insight into the atmosphere in Yaroslav during Andropov's tenure in the Komsomol there is offered by N. S. Patolichev, who was in the Yaroslav Party apparatus from 1938 to 1941. (He was made Oblast First Secretary in 1939.) Patolichev's memoirs, published in 1977, describe the tremendous pressure on Party personnel to ensure that industry produced its maximum output, particularly since Yaroslav was an important industrial centre. Failures often resulted in dire consequences for plant managers and the responsible Party officials: " Several sensational trials of wreckers, the embarrassment of leading cadres in these circumstances—all this created an atmosphere of anxiety."[6] As Komsomol First Secretary, Andropov was no doubt subjected to similar pressures, for the Komsomol was also responsible for mobilizing industrial production. His successful work in Yaroslav gave him experience in both the economic and political realms, which proved useful for his subsequent positions in Karelo-Finland.

The Karelo-Finnish Republic

In 1938, after A. V. Kosarev, First Secretary of the All-Union Komsomol, was purged, N. A. Mikhailov took over this post. It was under Mikhailov's leadership that, in 1940, Andropov's career received another boost: he was " elected " First Secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee in the newly-created Karelo-Finnish Republic.[7] The

[4] Yu. Andropov, " Ogradit' molodezh' ot tletvornogo vliyaniya tserkovnikov i sektantov," in *Yuniy kommunist*, No. 7, July 1938, pp. 48–50.

[5] Ibid. p. 48.

[6] N. S. Patolichev, *Ispytanie na zrelost'* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1977), p. 97. According to one Western book, *Andropov: New Challenge to the West* by Arnold Beichman and Mikhail Bernstam (Stein and Day, New York, 1983), which appeared after this article was submitted for publication (see p. 68), Andropov, Patolichev and an NKVD official named Rappoport formed a " triumvirate " in 1938 which ruled the Yaroslav Oblast (p. 29). The authors also claim that Patolichev had a high regard for Andropov and became his most important patron (pp. 31–39). The sources cited by the authors, however, do not document these claims, and it is most doubtful that, as a Komsomol official, Andropov would have played such a prominent role in Yaroslav. Patolichev's memoirs, which include lengthy accounts of his close relations with various Party comrades, contain only a one-sentence reference to Andropov (p. 160), with no words of praise. While Andropov did work with Patolichev, and the latter may have influenced Andropov's subsequent career, their relationship does not appear to have been particularly close in Yaroslav.

[7] Mikhailov, who remained head of the Komsomol until 1952, when he became a Central Committee secretary and head of Agitprop, seems to have considered Andropov a valuable Komsomol official (see note 15 below).

Karelo-Finnish Republic, which was formed in 1940 after the end of the Russo-Finnish War, included some seven new regions which had been annexed from Finland by the USSR. The economy of Karelia had been devastated by the war and apparently much of the population had fled the newly-annexed regions. Forty thousand peasant families and 8,000 factory workers were resettled there in 1940 with the objective of restoring the area's agriculture and industry as soon as possible.

The strict measures which were adopted in June 1940 established what amounted to a regime of forced labour: seven-day work weeks were instituted and workers were forbidden to leave their places of employment. The main task of the Party organization in Karelia was to ensure that labour discipline was strictly enforced and to get as much productivity as possible out of workers and peasants.[8] The Karelo-Finnish Komsomol played an important role in this economic drive. When its first Congress took place in June 1940, there were 23,000 members, who were to serve as the avant-garde in ensuring that the third five-year plan was fulfilled. Almost a quarter of the workers employed in the major industry, lumber, were Komsomolites.[9]

When the Germans attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941 and Finland allied with Germany, Karelia was under immediate threat. On 22 June 1941, Andropov spoke (along with other Party officials) at a mass meeting in Petrozavodsk urging the people to direct all their efforts to defending the Soviet Union. The Komsomol worked with the Party to mobilize the population into the army as soon as possible.[10] The war efforts in Karelia were to little avail, however, and by the end of 1941 over two-thirds of Karelia was in enemy hands. This meant that much Soviet activity in this area was directed towards the partisan movement, underground Party work and intelligence.

The Komsomol participated actively in these efforts. By mid-August 1941, 15 partisan detachments, encompassing 1,771 men, had been organized in Karelia. At least 25 per cent of these men were Komsomolites. Though Andropov's official biographies state that he only " took part " in partisan activities, other sources make it clear that he had a leading role: G. N. Kupriyanov, who served as First Secretary in Karelia from 1938 to 1950, notes in his memoirs that Andropov was a direct organizer of partisan and underground work and was one of those responsible for selecting and training cadres for intelligence missions.[11]

Andropov must have worked closely with the NKVD in organizing partisan and intelligence activities. Before the Central Staff of the

[8] See *Ocherki istorii Karelii*, Vol. II (Petrozavodsk, 1964), pp. 320–28; and *Ocherki istorii karel'skoi organizatsii KPSS* (Petrozavodsk, 1974), pp. 310–18. Interestingly, the first source, while discussing many Party and Komsomol figures, makes no mention of Andropov; the 1974 Party history, however, contains several references to him.

[9] *Ocherki ist. karel. organiz.*, pp. 130–31.

[10] Ibid. p. 324.

[11] G. N. Kupriyanov, *Ot varentseva morya do Ladogi* (Lenizdat, 1972), pp. 243–42; G. N. Kupriyanov, *Za liniei karel'skogo fronta* (Petrozavodsk, 1975), pp. 78–79; 269; and 357. Andropov wrote an article describing Komsomol participation in the partisan movement: " Na severnykh rubezhakh," in *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, 21 Oct. 1943, p. 3.

Partisan Movement was established in mid-1942, the NKVD shared directly in partisan control, together with the Red Army and the Party, and it continued to play an important role throughout the war. As John Armstrong points out, Party officials who were closely associated with the NKVD were the guiding figures in the partisan movement.[12]

An even stronger connection between Andropov and the NKVD is suggested by Andropov's participation in organizing so-called " assault battalions " (*istrebitel'nye batal'ony*) in Petrozavodsk in 1941. These battalions were created by the NKVD to fulfil rear-area security functions, such as the protection of important military and economic installations and the destruction of enemy agents who had penetrated Soviet defences. According to the *Soviet Military Encyclopaedia*, " the formation, training and activity of the assault battalions was directed by special staffs attached to the USSR and Republic NKVDs and the regional and district internal affairs administrations."[13] P. S. Prokkonen, Chairman of the Karelian Council of People's Commissars during the war, states in his reminiscences that Andropov, together with the Gorkom First Secretary, played a " major part " in establishing three assault battalions in Petrozavodsk: " they selected the staff and the commanders of the assault battalions and organized their training."[14]

Thus it seems that Andropov established close ties with the state security organs at this stage in his career. It is also possible that these ties had been developed earlier—at the time when Andropov was rising in the Komsomol apparatus during the 1930s. The Komsomol has always been a major source of recruits for the security police and the latter presumably had a significant network of their own men in the Komsomol. In any case, his connections with the NKVD may help to explain why Andropov was later chosen to head the state security organs.

IN 1944, Andropov was transferred to the Party apparatus and became Second Secretary of the Petrozavodsk City Party Committee (at some point after Petrozavodsk was liberated by the Soviets in June 1944). This move was instigated by G. N. Kupriyanov, who states more than once in his memoirs that he had a high regard for Andropov as a Party comrade.[15]

[12] John A. Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in World War II* (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1964), pp. 50–51; and John A. Armstrong, *The Politics of Totalitarianism* (Random House, New York, 1960), p. 160.

[13] *Sovetskaya voennaya entsiklopediya*, Vol. 3 (Moscow, 1977), p. 643.

[14] *Nezabyvaemoe. Vospominaniya o velikoi otechestvennoi voine*, ed. N. N. Shushkin (Petrozavodsk, 1967), pp. 262–63.

[15] See, for example, Kupriyanov, *Ot varentseva morya*, pp. 243–44. " I had great respect for Yurii Vladimirovich. He was easy to work with, pleasant to talk to. In every new task, large or small, he found something new, always enfused a fresh spirit into any undertaking. He was loved not only by the Komsomolites, but by the entire Party apparatus." Kupriyanov recalls how Mikhailov approached him in late 1943 with a request that he free Andropov for the post of First Secretary of the Ukrainian Komsomol, but Kupriyanov refused, because Andropov was too valuable to him (*Ot varentseva*, p. 244). Andropov's move from Komsomol First Secretary to Second Secretary of Petrozavodsk Gorkom was in no way a demotion, as one source has suggested (see Beichman and Bernstam, p. 81), but a normal pattern for an official transferring from the Komsomol to the Party apparatus. The careers of numerous other Komsomol officials (such as K. Mazurov and P. Masherov in Byelorussia, for example) followed similar paths.

The Party leadership in Karelia faced the task of rebuilding the economy and overcoming the ill-effects on the population of the enemy occupation. In other words, they had to " re-educate " the people in the spirit of Soviet patriotism. A decree issued by the CPSU Central Committee in November 1944 severely criticized the Party leadership in Karelia for deficiencies in this area. The city and district Party committees were blamed for complacency and indifference to discipline and the mass political education of workers.[16] This decree apparently inspired Party leaders to step up the tempo of their efforts. As part of a programme of mass political education, political seminars were conducted among workers, Party schools were set up and an evening-course University of Marxism-Leninism was established by the Petrozavodsk City Party Committee. The drive to educate Party cadres and workers encouraged Andropov to further his own education. Apart from his technical training at the Water Transport School in Rybinsk, his education had not continued after the age of 16. According to his biographies, he enrolled at Petrozavodsk State University, where during the years 1944–51 he completed five full-time courses (*kursy*), but Kupriyanov recalls that Andropov did not begin his studies until 1946, when he became an external student in the history department. In any case, since Andropov was much occupied with his Party tasks during this period and Petrozavodsk was a Finnish-language university, his education must have been somewhat limited.[17]

Andropov received another promotion in 1947, when—again at Kupriyanov's instigation—he moved to the post of Second Secretary of the Karelo-Finnish Republic. Second Secretaries in non-Russian republics usually serve as " watchdogs " for the central Party apparatus over the activities of the First Secretary and the local Party organizations. Andropov's role is more difficult to discern, however, since he apparently had good relations with Kupriyanov, who was a close protégé of the powerful Leningrad Party leader, Andrei Zhdanov. Not long after Andropov took up his new post there was a major purge of the republic's Party apparatus; in 1948 alone, over a third of the officials there were replaced.[18]

An even more extensive purge was to follow. At a republic Party Congress which took place in April 1949, serious problems were noted in the organization of Karelia's economy as a result of poor Party direction. Andropov himself gave a speech on this occasion in which he was sharply critical of the republic's Gosplan for its failures in economic planning, as well as of Party organizations responsible for this area.[19] On 10 January 1950, the CPSU Central Committee noted " grave deficiencies " in Party work among cadres and in the direction of the economy in the

[16] *Ocherki ist. karel. organiz.*, p. 363.

[17] Kupriyanov, *Ot varentseva morya*, p. 244. Kupriyanov claims that Andropov finished his higher education at Petrozavodsk, but this does not accord with other sources.

[18] Ibid. p. 372. This purge was by no means restricted to Karelia. Large post-war purges took place in all the non-Russian republics. See Brzezinski, pp. 145–50.

[19] *Leninskoe znamya* (Petrozavodsk), 29 Apr. 1949, p. 2.

Karelo-Finnish Republic. G. N. Kupriyanov was relieved of his duties and arrested, while dismissals of many other Party officials followed.[20] This purge was part of a drive against the associates of Zhdanov, who had been a bitter enemy of Malenkov. After Zhdanov's sudden death in August 1948, many of those close to him disappeared or fell into disfavour.

Andropov survived this upheaval and retained his post until his transfer to the CPSU Central Committee apparatus in 1951. To judge from the articles Andropov had written during this period, he clearly had some responsibility for Party cadres, along with Party direction of industry, and therefore would have been involved in implementing the purges, but there is some interesting evidence which suggests that he himself may have barely escaped being purged some months earlier. Shortly before the April 1949 republic Party Congress, Andropov wrote an article entitled " The Training and Education of Leading Soviet Cadres," which appeared in *Izvestia* at the beginning of February.[21] This same piece was reprinted in 1979 in a collection of his speeches and articles, but with the curious omission of three paragraphs describing a Party conference in Karelia on the subject of Voznesensky's book *The War Economy of the USSR in the Period of the Great Patriotic War*.[22] In the original piece, Andropov, who apparently had taken part in the organization of the conference, gave a detailed account of the proceedings, attended by some 62 economic officials, and stressed how it demonstrated the ideological growth of these officials.

Voznesensky, it will be recalled, was a Politburo member, Deputy Premier and Chairman of Gosplan, whose book was much praised when it was published in a mass edition in 1947. But Voznesensky had been a protégé of Zhdanov, and Beria and Malenkov had apparently been intriguing against him for some time. There were few signs that he was in trouble until 5 March 1949, when he was suddenly removed from all his posts and expelled from the Party. This was followed by a purge of Gosplan. Voznesensky was eventually arrested, tried in the famous Leningrad case and executed. There were other victims too. In July 1949, the editor of the journal *Bolshevik*, P. N. Fedoseev, was removed for " servile glorification of Voznesensky's book." At the same time a Central Committee decree censured Agitprop's leaders for having " fawningly praised " Voznesensky's book and recommending that it be used in schools.[23]

Andropov's article, praising Voznesensky's book in the pages of *Izvestia* just a month before the latter's downfall, was ill-timed to say the least. His subsequent outspoken criticism of Karelia's Gosplan officials in

[20] *Ocherki ist. karel organiz.*, pp. 388–89.

[21] Yu. V. Andropov, " Ucheba i vospitanie rukovodyashchikh sovetskikh kadrov," *Izvestia*, 1 Feb. 1949, p. 4.

[22] See Yu. V. Andropov, *Izbrannye rechi i stat'i* (Politizdat, Moscow, 1979), pp. 39–41.

[23] For a detailed discussion of the Leningrad case, see Werner G. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics. The Fall of Zhdanov and the Defeat of Modernization, 1946–53* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1982), pp. 30–35; 122–42. Apparently, Voznesensky had also fallen into disfavour with Stalin because of the latter's jealousy.

the speech he gave two months later at the republic Party Congress may have been an attempt to ally himself quickly with the dominant forces in the Kremlin and offset his previous mistake. Clearly, if a purge of Gosplan at the national level was taking place, many of the officials in republic Gosplans associated with them would have to go as well.

IT is difficult to speculate on the question of where Andropov stood at this time in terms of the intense power struggles that were going on in the Kremlin, but he may have been associated with the Zhdanovites through his connection with Kupriyanov. Also, Zhdanov himself took an active interest in Karelo-Finnish affairs. He had been among the most formidable advocates of the invasion of Finland in 1939 (as a means of ensuring the security of Leningrad). After Finland's agreement to a cease-fire in 1944, Zhdanov spent several months in Helsinki supervising the armistice agreement. During these years (1940–45) he had frequent contact with Karelian Party leaders, possibly including Andropov.[24]

In addition, two Party officials who had served with Andropov in Yaroslav, N. S. Patolichev and A. N. Larionov, were close allies of Zhdanov and bitter foes of Malenkov. After leaving Yaroslav in 1941, Patolichev, whose hostility towards Malenkov is evident from his memoirs, eventually became head of one of the two Central Committee Departments responsible for cadres in 1946–47. He was then transferred from the Central Committee apparatus to take up Party work outside Moscow.[25] Larionov, who was Second Secretary in Yaroslav under Patolichev, served as First Secretary there until 1946, when he became deputy chief of the Central Committee Cadres Administration. (Both Patolichev and Larionov were in positions to have influenced Andropov's promotion in 1947.) In late 1948, Larionov was transferred to the Ryazan Party apparatus—a move apparently instigated by Malenkov as part of his drive against the Zhdanovites. Malenkov also tried to drag Larionov's replacement as Party chief in Yaroslav, I. M. Turko (another Zhdanov protégé) into the Leningrad case by summoning him to Moscow and forcing him to sign false documents.[26] Andropov's connections with the Yaroslav group and with Zhdanov may have incurred Malenkov's disfavour.

[24] Ibid. pp. 27–28; Max Jacobsen, *The Diplomacy of the Winter War. An Account of the Russo-Finnish War, 1939–40* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1961), pp. 144–45; and Kupriyanov, *Ot varentseva morya*, pp. 1–70.

[25] Patolichev, pp. 113–14 and Hahn, pp. 140–42. Patolichev was First Secretary of the Rostov Obkom from 1947 to 1950 and First Secretary of the Byelorussian Republic from 1950 to 1956. He returned to Moscow in 1957 to become First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and in 1958 Minister of Foreign Trade, a post he still holds.

[26] Hahn, pp. 108–109; 125. It is interesting that Larionov, after several years of obscurity as First Secretary of the Ryazan Party Committee, became the subject of a scandal in 1959–60. He reportedly committed suicide in 1960 after the exposure of his speculation in livestock. The incident was embarrassing to Khrushchev, who had praised Larionov publicly in 1959 for over-fulfilling the economic plan. See M. Tatu, *Power in the Kremlin* (The Viking Press, New York, 1967), pp. 128–29.

Moscow and Budapest

Andropov left his post in the Karelo-Finnish Party in 1951, when he was transferred to the Central Committee apparatus in Moscow. According to his official biographies, he took up the duties of a Central Committee inspector and later became chief of a sub-department (*podotdel*) of the Central Committee. His biographies do not tell us which department of the Central Committee he was working in, but it was most probably the Party, Trade Union and Komsomol Organs Department, created in 1949 by the merger of two departments responsible for Party cadres: the Administration for Checking Party Organs and the Cadres Administration. Within the Checking Administration, an institution of inspectors with considerable authority had been created in 1946 to supervise the work of local Party officials. Since this institution continued to exist under the new Party, Trade Union and Komsomol Organs Department, Andropov was presumably working there as an inspector. When he became head of a sub-department, he seems to have remained in this same department. References to sub-departments are rare, and one of the few times such a body was mentioned, it was in connection with a person who had served in the Party Organs Department.[27]

The head of the Party Organs Department (and thus Andropov's boss) from approximately 1951 to October 1952 was N. M. Pegov, who had replaced a Malenkov protégé named N. N. Shatalin. When Pegov became a Central Committee Secretary, his successor as department head was A. B. Aristov. At the March 1953 Plenum which followed Stalin's death, both Pegov and Aristov were removed from the Central Committee apparatus (presumably as a punishment by Malenkov). Pegov was made a secretary to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and Aristov was exiled to the Far East.[28] Andropov's former boss in the Komsomol, N. A. Mikhailov, also suffered a setback. After Stalin's death he was not elected to the new Presidium. He was transferred from his job as head of Agitprop to the post of First Secretary of the Moscow Gorkom, and was then sent off to Poland as ambassador in early 1954.[29]

Andropov's transfer in 1953 from the Central Committee to diplomatic work was a clear demotion, and indicated that he too was a victim of the general shake-up in the Party following Stalin's death and, possibly, of Malenkov's wrath. He worked briefly as head of the Fourth European

[27] V. M. Churaev was identified in *Pravda*, 17 Feb. 1954, as being a deputy chief of the Party, Trade Unions and Komsomol Organs Department. According to his obituary (*Pravda*, 2 Mar. 1982, p. 6) he headed a sub-department of the Central Committee in the early 1950s.

[28] Hahn, pp. 146; 219. After 1956, Pegov served for several years in diplomatic posts, and was then identified as head of the Central Committee Department for Cadres Abroad in 1975. This department is known to work closely with the KGB, so Pegov and Andropov no doubt renewed their association at this time. Beichman and Bernstam, pp. 112–21, for some reason say that S. D. Ignat'ev, who became MGB head in 1952, was chief of the Party Organs Department in 1951. From this connection they try to show that Andropov was at the centre of the purge preparations that began shortly before Stalin's death. Ignat'ev, however, was in the Uzbek Party apparatus from 1949 until he took up his MGB post in late 1951 or 1952. There is no evidence to link Andropov with Ignat'ev or Stalin's purge preparations.

[29] From 1955 to 1960 Mikhailov served as USSR Minister of Culture. He was then Ambassador to Indonesia from 1960 to 1965, when he became Chairman of the State Committee for Publishing, a post he held until his retirement in 1970.

Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (concerned with Poland and Czechoslovakia) and was then sent to Budapest as counsellor in the Soviet Embassy. This move prevented Andropov from completing the studies he had begun in 1951 at the Higher Party School in Moscow. According to one biography, he finished four courses there before moving to Budapest. (It is interesting that his education was officially given as " unfinished higher " until 1979 when suddenly the published biographies of deputies of the Supreme Soviet listed him as having received higher education.) If, as is claimed, Andropov is fluent in English, he may well have learned it at the Higher Party School. However, the former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Malcolm Toon, has stated that in his several encounters with Andropov he never heard him speak a word of English.[30]

Andropov was promoted in 1954 to the post of Ambassador to Hungary, where he remained for the next three years. It was in this capacity that he witnessed at first-hand the events leading up to the Hungarian revolution of 1956 and presided over the Soviet invasion. At this time Andropov was still a relatively young man—40 years old. The changes which took place in Hungary—and all over Eastern Europe—in the wake of Stalin's death no doubt made a lasting impression on him. A new period ensued in Hungary with the appointment of Imre Nagy as Prime Minister in July 1953. A considerably milder political atmosphere was introduced, and Hungary went much further than the USSR in initiating economic reforms. The abuses of police power became a dominant theme, and Andropov could see for himself the depth of public hatred for the police in Hungary. Though Nagy was ousted shortly after the fall of Malenkov in February 1955, the effects of the 20th Party Congress a year later brought about a feeling in Hungary that the old communist order was finished. Events in Poland—the riots in June 1956 and the successful demands of the Poles for a minimum of national independence—prepared the ground for violent action in Budapest. The experience of watching the tide of revolution spread in Hungary must have given Andropov a deep understanding of potential instability in Eastern Europe and had a profound effect on his views about dealing with this area in the years to come, particularly when unrest occurred later in Poland.

WHAT was Andropov's part in suppressing the Hungarian revolution? The most important decisions during the crisis were of course made by the Soviet Presidium. Suslov and Mikoyan travelled to Budapest personally after the initial outbreak of violence on 24 October to preside over the installation of Janos Kadar as First Secretary and they gave their consent to Nagy's assumption of the premiership. They returned again on 1 November to talk with Kadar and presumably to discuss Soviet plans to invade. As the man-on-the-spot in Budapest, however, Andropov no

[30] Malcolm Toon, " Russia under Andropov—as Seen by a Former Ambassador," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 17 Nov. 1982, p. 23.

doubt played a key role. Khrushchev points out in his memoirs that the Soviet Embassy staff provided assessments of the situation in Budapest after the Soviets had initially pulled their troops out of the city—thus giving the Presidium the information upon which it based the decision for an all-out invasion.[31] As Khrushchev indicates, the Soviets decided to crush the Hungarian revolution with a full-scale invasion several days before their troops actually moved back into Budapest on 4 November.[32] Andropov was no doubt apprised of this decision and was apparently instructed to persuade the Nagy government that the Soviets had no intention of invading, so that the Hungarian army would not make preparations to repulse the attack. While fresh Soviet forces crossed the Hungarian borders and were advancing towards Budapest, Andropov continued to reassure Nagy that Soviet troops were going ahead with their stated plan to leave Hungary.

Major General Bela Kiraly, former military commander of Budapest, later recounted Andropov's duplicitous role. On 2 November Kiraly received an urgent telephone call from Nagy, who reported that Andropov had complained about bands of Hungarians raging around his embassy. According to Kiraly, Andropov had told Nagy that if the Hungarian government could not control the mobs he would be obliged to call in Soviet troops. When Kiraly arrived at the Soviet Embassy with his men there were no signs of trouble. Kiraly writes:

> I was ushered to the office of Ambassador Yuri Andropov. " I have a command from my premier to check the rioting here," I said, " but I see no rioting." The ambassador appeared embarrassed. He said there had been reports of trouble, but it had stopped. " We Russians don't want to mix in your business," he said. " We understand your troubles and we are on your side." He walked around the desk and said, " Did you know that we have offered to negotiate with your government? " I said I did not. " Our government wants to take its troops out of Hungary immediately, and we want a discussion to arrange the details of the evacuation." I was delighted, and told him so . . .[33]

On the morning of the invasion of Budapest, 4 November, Kiraly recalled that he telephoned Nagy to tell him that Budapest was being invaded and begged for orders to open fire: " ' No, no,' Nagy said. ' Calm down, the Russian Ambassador is here in my office. He is calling Moscow right now. There is some misunderstanding. You must not open fire.' "[34]

It is perhaps ironic that the man Andropov saw installed as Party chief

[31] *Khrushchev Remembers*, Transl. and ed. by Strobe Talbott (Little, Brown and Co., Boston, Toronto, 1970), p. 417.

[32] Ibid. pp. 418–22.

[33] *The Hungarian Revolution. The Story of the October Uprising as Recorded in Documents, Dispatches, Eye-Witness Accounts and World-Wide Reactions*, ed. Melvin J. Lasky (Martin, Secker and Warburg, Ltd., London, 1957), p. 204.

[34] Ibid. p. 228. According to John Barron, Andropov also had a role in determining the subsequent fate of Nagy, who, having been assured that no reprisals would be taken against him, left his place of asylum in the Yugoslav Embassy. He was seized by Soviet officers and later executed. See John Barron, *KGB. The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents* (Bantam Books, New York, 1974), p. 97.

in Hungary, Janos Kadar, had served as deputy chief of Budapest's police immediately after the war and then rose to be Minister of Internal Affairs and head of the secret police. In this position he had shown no mercy to the opponents of communism, particularly in 1949. The fact that Kadar proved to be such an effective and successful Party leader, despite the legacy of his police background, may have offered an example to Andropov in his own political aspirations.

Return to Moscow

Andropov's performance in Budapest must have satisfied the Kremlin leadership, particularly Khrushchev, for in May 1957 he was brought back to Moscow to head the newly-created Central Committee Department for Liaison with Socialist Countries. He supervised this department for the next 10 years, and was elevated in 1962 to the Central Committee Secretariat. The functions of the Liaison Department had formerly belonged to the International Department, headed by Boris Ponomarev. But evidently the increasing importance of countries in the Eastern bloc made it necessary to create a separate department for dealing with this area. The International Department, however, still retained overall control for foreign policy, and Ponomarev, who was clearly senior to Andropov, appears to have continued his involvement with the affairs of the Eastern bloc, along with his other functions.[35]

In May 1960, Ponomarev, Andropov and F. Konstantinov (head of Agitprop) co-authored an article entitled " On Old Revisionist Positions," which appeared in the Party journal *Kommunist*.[36] The article was a scathing invective against Yugoslav " revisionism." Yugoslav leaders were criticized for betraying the principles of Marxism-Leninism by relying on capitalist economic relationships and having a hostile attitude towards state ownership. The authors condemned Yugoslavia for promoting an incorrect idea of peaceful coexistence and reasserted the principle of inevitable conflict between the world's two main systems—capitalism and communism. Peaceful coexistence, wrote the authors, in no way meant reconciliation with capitalists or an end to the class struggle, but rather that the struggle would be waged by economic, political and ideological means rather than war.

The timing of the article, in view of strained relations with the US and Yugoslavia, may have accounted for its particularly belligerent tone. But Ponomarev—along with his mentor, Suslov—was a spokesman for ideological orthodoxy, and Andropov seems to have aligned himself with his senior colleagues' views at this time. In December 1961, for example, he wrote an article for *Pravda* which was sharply critical of the Albanian Labour Party for its deviations from Marxism, and which clearly aroused the wrath of Albanian leaders, who accused him two months later of

[35] On Ponomarev and the International Department, see Leonard Schapiro, " The International Department of the CPSU: Key to Soviet Policy," in *The International Journal*, Winter 1976–77, pp. 40–55.

[36] B. Ponomarev, F. Konstantinov and Yu. Andropov, " Na starykh revizionistskikh pozitsiyakh," in *Kommunist*, No. 8, May 1960, pp. 24–47.

being a " professional provocateur and Khrushchev's faithful spokesman."[37]

By 1964 Andropov's pronouncements on the systems of other communist countries had changed considerably. In a speech delivered to commemorate Lenin's birthday in April 1964 he went out of his way to praise " bold and creative solutions " to the problems of building socialism, and criticized those who " deny the modern generation of revolutionaries the right of independent thought and intimidate with the scarecrow of ' revisionism ' those who try to develop Marxist-Leninist theory."[38] Five months later, in a speech delivered in Berlin to commemorate the founding of the First International, Andropov stated that communists were not doctrinaire and that they in no way wanted to exclude other progressive parties and revolutionaries from participating in the socialist movement.[39]

THE apparent changes in Andropov's views from 1960–61 to 1964 may in part be accounted for by the fact that in 1964 he was speaking alone, not with Ponomarev. He was now a member of the Secretariat, and had a more independent and authoritative status. Furthermore, after presiding for several years over developments in Eastern Europe in his capacity as head of the Liaison Department, Andropov may well have become convinced of the necessity for the economic reforms that were being advocated in these countries. Gradually, most Soviet leaders were realizing that such changes had to be made in order to make these countries economically viable and politically stable. International circumstances had also changed significantly in these years. A *rapprochement* had developed with the West, and Yugoslavia had been accepted back into the socialist camp. China was now the chief enemy, posing a challenge to Soviet interests and making the Soviets more willing to cooperate with broad elements of the socialist movement. Thus, to a large extent Andropov's views were in line with a general change in attitude within the Soviet leadership (Khrushchev was by now an outspoken advocate of *rapprochement* with Yugoslavia).

It has been suggested that at this time Andropov was a protégé of Otto Kuusinen, the old Finnish Bolshevik who had served in the Karelian Republic during Andropov's tenure there from 1940 to 1951. Kuusinen, a strong Khrushchev supporter, was brought back to Moscow in 1957 to serve in the Secretariat and as a full member of the Presidium. According to Jerry Hough, Kuusinen was not only responsible for Andropov's rise during the period after 1957, he also had a " liberalizing " influence on

[37] See *Pravda*, 2 Dec. 1961, p. 2; and the Albanian Party's central organ, *Zeri i Popullit*, 16 Feb. 1962 (as quoted in Ivo Duchacek, " Czechoslovakia: The Past Reburied," in *Problems of Communism*, No. 3, May–June 1962, p. 24). The Albanians accused Andropov of having engaged in feverish activities against them, together with Rudolf Barak, the former Czech Minister of Internal Affairs, who was arrested in Feb. 1962. *Zeri i Popullit* published another scathing attack on Andropov on 13 Oct. 1962, shortly after he made a trip to Yugoslavia with Brezhnev.

[38] See Andropov, *Izbrannye*, pp. 57–71 (quotation, p. 58).

[39] This speech was reprinted in *Kommunist*, No. 14, Sept. 1964, pp. 11–26.

Andropov.[40] Hough says that Kuusinen was " a reformist, non-dogmatic ideologist, who served as a counterpoint to the more conservative Mikhail Suslov." As proof of Kuusinen's liberal propensities, Hough notes that he argued in favour of the popular front in 1934, and in 1945–46 wrote favourably about West European socialists, and even advocated independence for Poland.

There is much evidence, however, that detracts from the picture of Kuusinen as a liberal. As a Comintern leader in the 1930s, Kuusinen, along with many others, did indeed advocate the popular front policy. But this was a short-term strategy designed to serve the immediate needs of the Soviet Union. When the popular front policy was discontinued and the pact with Germany signed, Kuusinen continued to be a loyal servant of Stalin, taking an active role in the purges of foreign communist leaders during 1937–38. According to John Armstrong, for example, when Polish Communist Party leaders were called to Moscow in 1938 on the pretext of a meeting, they were confronted by a small group of Comintern officials, including Kuusinen, and accused of treason. All were either executed or died later in concentration camps.[41]

In 1939 Kuusinen was installed as head of a puppet Finnish government set up by the Soviets before their planned invasion of Finland. According to the historian Max Jakobsen, Kuusinen was a prime instigator of the invasion:

> O. V. Kuusinen, Secretary General of the Comintern, was Stalin's ideological advisor and ghost writer. He thus had the dictator's ear, and it is hardly fanciful to suggest that he was largely responsible for convincing the Soviet leaders of the rotten state of capitalist Finland—a nation riddled with " contradictions " and fit for lancing with a Russian bayonet."[42]

Once the Karelo-Finnish Republic had been set up in 1940, Kuusinen was not given a Party post, but rather was installed as President of the Presidium of the Karelian Supreme Soviet—a position with more visibility than responsibility. Though he was in the Party bureau, Kuusinen does not appear to have had much authority over Andropov during the latter's years in Karelia's Komsomol and Party organs. Andropov left Karelia and joined the Central Committee apparatus six years before Kuusinen was called back to Moscow in 1957. So it is unlikely that Kuusinen had anything to do with Andropov's career at this time. Furthermore, Kuusinen was an old man—even by Kremlin standards—by the time he joined the Secretariat, and most Western experts dismiss him as a neo-Stalinist with little influence. Discussing the 10 members of the Secretariat in 1957, Leonard Schapiro wrote: " Kuusinen, an old man of seventy-six, could probably be discounted, especially as his intellectual gifts did not suggest that he was the

[40] Jerry Hough, " Who is Yurii Andropov? " in the *Washington Post*, 27 May 1982, p. A27; and " Soviet Succession. Issues and Personalities," in *Problems of Communism*, Sept.–Oct. 1982, pp. 20–42.
[41] Armstrong, *Politics*, p. 45.
[42] Jakobsen, pp. 145–46.

' eminence grise ' of the Party."[43] To view Kuusinen as a counterweight to Suslov seems inaccurate, since the latter, along with Ponomarev, was a dominant figure in Soviet policy-making.

By late 1966, just six months before he was to assume the chairmanship of the KGB, Andropov seems to have altered his views further. In November 1966, he delivered a speech at Moscow State University where he praised the economic reforms carried out in Eastern Europe, as well as those decided upon at the March 1965 Plenum of the CPSU. But he went on to stress the dangers of going too far and warned that Western imperialists were counting on an internal " evolution " in socialist countries, whereby capitalist changes would be introduced to undermine socialism. He also emphasized that relations among socialist countries must be constructed on a strictly legal basis with a stronger adherence to contractual agreements such as the Warsaw Pact.[44]

This again reflected a general change in the Soviet attitude towards Eastern Europe, brought about largely by fears that West Germany's overtures to these countries threatened Soviet dominance. This caused the Soviets to take measures to strengthen the Warsaw Pact alliance. According to Jiri Valenta, Andropov accompanied Brezhnev on " discipline trips " to East European countries in 1966–67, which were intended to prevent the establishment of diplomatic relations between West Germany and Eastern Europe.[45]

Valenta also suggests that Andropov was appointed to head the KGB in May 1967 because Brezhnev wanted a trusted person with experience in East European affairs to be in that post. In view of the changes that were occurring in Eastern Europe at this time, this seems a reasonable supposition. The secret police is the key mechanism through which the Soviets maintain their hold in Eastern Europe and the KGB plays the primary role in coordinating these efforts. From this point of view, Andropov was the ideal candidate, particularly if, as suggested earlier, he had ties with the security police dating back to his partisan days or even earlier.

From the domestic standpoint, Andropov was also well suited for the job. His work in Karelia, where he helped to impose Soviet rule over the newly-established territories, gave him considerable experience in dealing with domestic security problems. Moreover, the Soviet leadership had shown—with the previous appointments of Shelepin and Semichastny—a preference for appointing persons with *Komsomol* backgrounds to head the KGB, apparently because the ties between these two organizations have always been close. As far as Brezhnev personally was concerned, Andropov was not a close ally or a protégé. Despite Brezhnev's authority, the Party leadership probably would not have permitted him to appoint

[43] Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Random House, New York, 1960), p. 566.

[44] Andropov, *Izbrannye rechi i stat'i*, pp. 91–107.

[45] Jiri Valenta, " Soviet Decisionmaking and the Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968," in *Studies in Comparative Communism*, Vol. VIII, Nos. 1 & 2, Spring/Summer 1975, pp. 155–56.

one of his " own " men to such an important post. But, to ensure his influence in the KGB, Brezhnev did manage to bring in some trusted allies to serve directly under Andropov, including S. K. Tsvigun as First Deputy Chairman, and G. K. Tsinev as a deputy chairman.[46]

Andropov as KGB Chairman

It has been suggested that during his tenure as KGB chief, Andropov devoted himself mainly to the foreign responsibilities of the KGB, leaving the domestic concerns to his deputies, but this suggestion seems improbable.[47] While Andropov may well have devoted more of his efforts to the foreign realm, he was clearly involved in domestic issues as well. One need only consider his speeches and writings during this period, which include continued discussions of problems of dissent and other domestic issues, to see this. There is, of course, a division of responsibilities between domestic and foreign affairs among the KGB deputy chairmen who supervise the different KGB directorates. But Andropov himself seems to have had overall responsibility.

Historically, it is important to ask how much influence Andropov had in the formulation of Soviet domestic and foreign policies and what his own views on issues were. Andropov's voice during the Brezhnev regime was one among several. Since he was not even a full member of the Politburo until 1973, it can be assumed that his direct influence was not that great initially. But the KGB is responsible for intelligence gathering both at home and abroad. Access to and control over such information naturally tends to place this organization in a powerful position. Furthermore, it is clear that the authority of the KGB—and of Andropov personally—increased significantly during the Brezhnev era. A vast publicity campaign designed to raise the prestige of the KGB was initiated shortly after Brezhnev became General Secretary. This campaign was accompanied by a steady increase in the representation of KGB officials in Party bodies at all levels.[48] This trend was to a large extent fostered by Brezhnev himself, who enthusiastically praised the KGB and conferred honours and awards on its officials throughout his tenure as Party chief. Having placed several of his own men in key KGB posts, he may have been attempting to establish the KGB as his own power base. In this respect, he underestimated Andropov, who apparently was able to gain a firm hold on the KGB, despite the presence of Brezhnev allies. Andropov's own political fortunes clearly benefited from the increased authority of his organization and in recent years he played an influential role in policy-making. Most Western experts, for example, believe that

[46] Brezhnev also is believed to have brought in V. M. Chebrikov to take over the KGB cadres department in 1967 but, although Chebrikov comes from Dnepropetrovsk, he may not have been a close protégé of Brezhnev, as my subsequent discussion indicates.

[47] See, for example, Hough, note 38.

[48] See Amy W. Knight, " The Powers of the Soviet KGB," in *Survey*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Summer 1981, pp. 139–48.

Andropov was a member of the Defence Council during the last years of his life.[49]

It is of course a matter of speculation to try to determine where Andropov and the KGB (assuming this represented a unified front, which may not be so) stood on various foreign policy issues. In some respects, Andropov seemed to be among the more moderate members of the Politburo. His acceptance of economic reforms in Eastern Europe, as mentioned above, indicates a less doctrinaire attitude than those of his colleagues. But these economic reforms were viewed as unavoidable to improve the economic growth and political stability of the Eastern bloc; pragmatism in facing economic realities should not be mistaken for liberalism. The invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 made it clear that the Soviets would tolerate reforms only up to a certain point.

Several Western observers have claimed that Andropov was among those in the Politburo who opposed the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Having witnessed at first-hand the Hungarian invasion in 1956, he supposedly advocated a policy of persuasion rather than force. But, as Jiri Valenta points out, Andropov's public statements at the time when signs of the Czechoslovak crisis first appeared show that he was gravely concerned about the threats that events in Czechoslovakia posed for the Soviet bloc. Furthermore, many of the KGB's collaborators in the Czechoslovak Ministry of Internal Affairs and their agents in the Czechoslovak intelligence services were removed from their posts by the Dubcek regime—thus depriving the KGB of crucial channels of influence and pressure upon Czechoslovakia.[50] This would have given Andropov good cause to back the invasion as the only recourse left to the Soviets. His strong support for the so-called "Brezhnev doctrine," formulated after the invasion, indicates that he had no reservations about overt Soviet intervention in the affairs of the Eastern bloc.

Nevertheless, as the cases of Afghanistan and Poland indicate, Andropov probably preferred non-military solutions to crises in countries under Soviet influence wherever possible. His statements and actions before and after the invasion of Afghanistan suggest that he was opposed to this move and probably advocated using the KGB to bring about political changes in Afghanistan rather than moving in Soviet troops.[51] As events have shown, Andropov was vindicated in advising against the invasion. The large-scale presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan has caused monumental problems for the Soviet leadership, including a serious deterioration in their relations with the West. The caution that the Soviets have exhibited with regard to Poland may be related to Andropov's moderating influence, while, conversely, the Polish crisis no doubt gave Andropov more opportunity for involvement in foreign policy decisions. The decision to quell disturbances in Poland

[49] On the Defence Council, see Michael Sadykiewicz, "Soviet Military Politics," in *Survey*, Vol. 26, No. 1, Winter 1982, pp. 179–210.

[50] Valenta, p. 156.

[51] Knight, pp. 150–54.

by using internal Polish forces instead of Soviet military intervention meant an important role for the KGB in coordinating these efforts, and their success can probably be credited to Andropov.

AS KGB chief, Andropov frequently made statements indicating that he was favourable to *détente*. It is not difficult to see how this position has accommodated the interests of the KGB. *Détente* creates an atmosphere that is conducive to the wide range of covert activities this institution engages in abroad, and in recent years such activities have played an increasingly important role in furthering Soviet foreign policy objectives.

In domestic affairs, Andropov has also shown himself to be an advocate of subtle yet effective means. Highly-publicized show trials of dissidents and large-scale arrests were avoided by the KGB under Andropov's leadership in favour of more sophisticated methods. Instead of arresting dissidents, the KGB calls them in for " friendly chats," to warn them of the possible consequences of their behaviour. These so-called " prophylactic measures " have been very successful. As Vladimir Bukovsky pointed out, " it's enough to arrest one out of every ten thousand of those who have seen the light—the most uppity one—to frighten all the others."[52]

Another method has been that of confining dissidents to psychiatric hospitals. Though this practice was begun before Andropov took over the KGB, he continued to make wide use of it as a means of combating dissent until 1973, when international protests caused the Soviets so much embarrassment that the practice was generally curtailed—though it is still used today in some cases. Andropov's own views on this policy were made clear in his speech to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Dzherzhinski's birth in September 1977. Dissent in the Soviet Union, said Andropov, was caused in a number of cases by mental instability. He also noted that " dissidence has become a profession that is well paid by foreign currency and other saps and in essence little different from the way imperialist services pay off their own agents."[53]

The KGB's handling of the cases of Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn and the practice of granting exit visas to Jews are further examples of a clever and flexible policy that takes world opinion into consideration. This is not humane, but rational. After all, if the KGB is to enjoy success in its many foreign ventures, it is much easier to operate when its reputation is unsullied by the use of crude methods at home. Furthermore, Andropov himself had his own image to consider if he was aspiring to the post of general secretary. Of course, the decisions on how to deal with dissent were formulated by the entire Politburo, not by Andropov alone. But Andropov has been very successful in carrying out these policies: the

[52] Vladimir Bukovsky, *To Build a Castle. My Life as a Dissenter*, Transl. Michael Scammel (The Viking Press, New York, 1978), p. 71.

[53] See *Pravda*, 10 Sept. 1977, p. 2.

ranks of the once-flourishing human rights movement have been completely decimated.

Accession to the Party Leadership

Andropov's move into the Party Secretariat in May 1982 marked the culmination of his slow but steady ascent through the Soviet power structure. It also signified a turning point in the intense behind-the-scenes struggle that seems to have been set off by Suslov's death four months earlier. From May onwards, Andropov was no longer a " dark-horse " candidate to succeed Brezhnev, but a prime contender for his post. His only opponent was Brezhnev's heir apparent, Konstantin Chernenko. Andropov's sudden prominence surprised many Western observers, who had considered his long-time association with the KGB a serious political liability that would be difficult to overcome. Yet, as it turned out, Andropov's chairmanship of the KGB was far from a liability; it provided him with the power base and experience necessary to gain the top Party post. His brief, six-month stint in the Secretariat was hardly long enough to rid him of the taint of his KGB association, but this was not such a serious problem. The security police have, after all, been completely " rehabilitated " since Brezhnev came to power in 1964.

A key to understanding Andropov's ascent to power is the recognition of how important the police have been in this process. Substantial personnel changes that have occurred in the top KGB apparatus since 1978 indicate that this institution has been a focal point in the Kremlin power struggle. Eleven out of the 14 republic KGB chairmen have been replaced since 1978, and in 1982 alone three new republic KGB chiefs were appointed. (There have also been substantial changes in the MVD apparatus; 11 republic MVD ministers have been replaced since 1978.) Among the delegates to the 26th Party Congress in 1981 the names of three hitherto unmentioned USSR KGB deputy chairmen were listed. Though it is not possible to determine the allegiances of all the new KGB appointees, it seems reasonable to assume that some of these personnel moves benefited Andropov politically.[54]

The sudden death on 19 January 1982 of Brezhnev's most powerful ally in the KGB, Semyon Tsvigun, First Deputy KGB Chairman, was clearly fortuitous for Andropov. This development, together with Suslov's death a week later, was followed by a marked rise in Andropov's political prominence. Tsvigun's demise seems to have been connected with the now famous bribery and corruption scandal involving members of Brezhnev's family. The KGB—probably at the instigation of Andropov—was behind efforts to expose the scandal in order to discredit

[54] These three, apparently new, deputy chairmen are S. N. Antonov, G. F. Grigorenko and V. A. Kryuchkov. Kryuchkov served as third secretary in the Soviet Embassy in Budapest during the 1950s and later in the CC Department for Liaison with Socialist Countries while Andropov headed this department. (See *Pravda*, 7 Dec. 1958 and 16 Nov. 1963.) One of the recently dismissed republic KGB chairmen was V. T. Shevchenko, head of the Kazakhstan KGB, who had served in the state security organs in that republic during Brezhnev's tenure there from 1954 to 1956.

the Party leader. Tsvigun may have been caught in the middle and, according to rumours, committed suicide. Whatever the facts are, the death of Brezhnev's " top man " in the KGB strengthened Andropov's hold over the organization.[55]

Initially, on 27 February, only one First Deputy KGB Chairman was named to replace Tsvigun—Brezhnev's ally from Dnepropetrovsk, G. K. Tsinev. Curiously, however, after a lapse of six weeks and at a time when Brezhnev was said to be seriously ill, the appointment of another first deputy, V. M. Chebrikov, was announced. Though there have been two such first deputies in the past, the timing of Chebrikov's appointment suggests that he was brought in to counter-balance Tsinev and was backed by Andropov. Chebrikov has been considered a Brezhnev protégé because he came to the central KGB apparatus in 1967 from the Dnepropetrovsk Party organization. But he is considerably younger than Brezhnev and did not begin his Party career in Dnepropetrovsk until 1951, after Brezhnev had left the area. Though Chebrikov may have had indirect ties with Brezhnev, it seems more likely that his 15 years of service under Andropov probably caused Chebrikov to ally himself with the latter. His subsequent appointment as KGB Chairman after Andropov became General Secretary is a strong indication of this.[56]

The appointment of Vitaly Fedorchuk in May 1982 to succeed Andropov as KGB Chairman was a further sign of deep police involvement in the power struggle. In order to ensure Party control over the police, the Soviet leadership had since 1958 maintained a policy of appointing only loyal Party *apparatchiki*, not career policemen, to head the KGB. Having served with the security organs since 1939 (for many years in the so-called " special departments " of the police, responsible for the armed forces, and from 1970 to 1982 as head of the Ukrainian KGB) Fedorchuk marked a clear break with this precedent. Fedorchuk, whose career with the KGB predated Andropov's chairmanship of this organization by many years, does not appear to have had any special connections with either Brezhnev or Andropov. But his appointment was a clear indication that the police establishment was asserting its authority.

For Andropov, Fedorchuk was the ideal interim successor. His years in the Ukraine had gained for him a reputation as a ruthless and effective suppressor of dissent and his image was in sharp contrast to that of Andropov. According to the former dissident General Petro Grigorenko, " It is difficult to find two people whose outward conduct is so different as Andropov and his successor. The first—complete courtesy, deference, tact. He never raises his voice, never pronounces a crude word.

[55] Brezhnev's failure to sign Tsvigun's obituary (*Pravda*, 21 Jan. 1982) has been widely interpreted to mean that Tsvigun was in disfavour with Brezhnev, but the two were known to be close allies (Tsvigun was reportedly Brezhnev's brother-in-law) and Brezhnev's signature could have been omitted for other reasons.

[56] Chebrikov graduated from the Dnepropetrovsk Metallurgical Institute in 1951 and then served in the Dnepropetrovsk Gorkom and Obkom Party apparatus until 1967, when he went to Moscow to serve as head of the KGB department for cadres. He became a deputy KGB chairman in 1968. Chebrikov was still involved with cadre and youth affairs responsibilities in 1981, as evidenced by his article which appeared in *Molodoi Kommunist*, No. 4, Apr. 1981, pp. 38–44.

Fedorchuk has been characterized in the very same terms by all the political prisoners' wives who have met him—a churl, a boor."[57] Fedorchuk's strong and ruthless image made Andropov less susceptible to accusations that he was still running things at the KGB after he moved to the Secretariat than he would have been if a Party *apparatchik*, inexperienced in KGB matters, had been appointed to this post.

THE complicated manoeuvering for power that went on in the months following the May Plenum made it clear that Andropov was still facing formidable opposition from the Brezhnev-Chernenko faction. (It was probably no coincidence, for example, that the choice of Andropov to give the Lenin Anniversary speech on 22 April was made at the time when Brezhnev was ill.) Chernenko was, after all, a strong opponent. Though he had no substantial power base of his own, he must have had the support of many Party officials loyal to Brezhnev. He had taken over many of Brezhnev's functions because of the latter's failing health, and seemed to play a prominent role in both foreign and domestic affairs. There is also some evidence that Chernenko himself had influence over the KGB, since he may well have inherited the post of Secretary responsible for Administrative Organs (the Central Committee Department that oversees the police and the military).[58]

Andropov's total eclipse from public view during most of September and October 1982 (longer than his usual holiday period) indicated a serious weakening in his position, particularly since Chernenko was highly visible as the number two man during this time. This coincided with Brezhnev's much-publicized trip to Baku on 24 September, which is of special significance because Geidar Aliev, then First Secretary of Azerbaijan, seems to have been a key figure in the Kremlin in-fighting. Aliev had served for a long time in the KGB before assuming his Party post in 1969. He had worked under Semyon Tsvigun for four years (1963–67) when the latter was Chairman of the Azerbaijan KGB. Later, Tsvigun reportedly recommended Aliev to Brezhnev as head of the Party in Azerbaijan. Relations between Brezhnev and Aliev had always seemed close, with the latter going out of his way to heap fulsome praise on the Party chief, and Brezhnev's visit to Baku may have been an effort to enlist Aliev's support against Andropov. Apparently Aliev was later persuaded to change his allegiance and back Andropov in return for being appointed First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and a

[57] Petro Grigorenko, "Etot Demokrat Andropov," in *Novoe Russkoe Slovo*, 30 July 1982, p. 3. Biographical information on Fedorchuk can be found in *Deputaty*, 1979 and in S. E. Ostryakov, *Voennye chekisty* (Moscow, 1979), p. 130.

[58] Chernenko made an unprecedented appearance at a ceremony for the KGB border guards on 27 May 1982. This was the first time a Politburo member had attended such a ceremony. Also, he was one of only four Politburo members to sign Tsvigun's obituary; the others were Andropov and Ustinov, who signed because of their KGB and military functions, respectively, and Gorbachev, who signed because he is a member of the Legislative Proposals Commission of the Supreme Soviet. Though Chernenko may have known Tsvigun when they both worked in Moldavia, he may also have signed Tsvigun's obituary because he is responsible for Administrative Organs.

full Politburo member (announced at the November 1982 Supreme Soviet Session).

Andropov's position remained uncertain until he was able to mobilize forces against Chernenko after Brezhnev's death, a task which, though accomplished quickly, may not have been easy. He presumably had to convince military leaders that he would maintain their interests, which was probably difficult in view of his seemingly cautious approach to military ventures and the fact that Brezhnev had made strong assurances to the military of his support just days before his death. According to *Le Monde*, Andropov faced considerable opposition in the Party. When the ruling core of the Politburo proposed Andropov as Party Chief at the extraordinary Plenum of the Central Committee following Brezhnev's death, a substantial group in the Central Committee, which favoured Chernenko, reportedly voiced their disagreement.[59] Signs that Andropov may not have had the unanimous backing of the Party—in particular his failure to be elected Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet at the November session of this body —emerged subsequently.

WHATEVER the factors were in Andropov's successful bid for power, it seems clear that the KGB provided him with the base of support necessary to achieve his goal, and it is this circumstance, rather than any distinctive character traits attributed to him, that provides the clue to his leadership. From what we know about Andropov, his basic orientation and outlook differed little from those of his colleagues. The rumours of his liberal tendencies, his intellectual abilities and his avant-garde taste in art clearly did not mesh with the picture that emerges from a close examination of his background and career. He was, after all, a product of his times. The fiery Komsomol days, the rapid political rise during the purges and the years of service in the Party apparatus were no doubt what formed his basic outlook and character, and these experiences were similar to those of other Kremlin leaders in his age group. Though Andropov did serve abroad for four years and made many trips to Eastern Europe during his tenure in the Central Committee Liaison Department, he never travelled outside the Communist bloc and had few contacts with non-communist leaders.

What distinguished Andropov from others in the Kremlin was his 15-year chairmanship of the KGB, which was marked by significant successes both at home and abroad. But this record of service, while demonstrating Andropov's skill and intelligence, hardly bespoke the image of him as a liberal, and it promised little in the way of substantial changes in either internal or external Soviet policies. Furthermore, his reliance on the police, rather than the Party, to gain his leadership post suggested that the police would play an increasingly important role in the Soviet system, and this is precisely what occurred. Not only did Andropov promote a former KGB man to the Politburo, he also ensured that the

[59] *Le Monde*, 21–22 Nov. 1982, p. 2.

leadership of both the KGB and the MVD—traditionally reserved for Party men—was in the hands of trusted KGB allies. He then used the police to institute widespread labour discipline and anti-corruption campaigns (which seem to have met with resistance on the part of the entrenched Party bureaucracy).[60] Thus, in a sense, Andropov's succession lacked the legitimacy of his two former predecessors, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, who gained the backing of the police and the military, but relied mainly on broad-based Party support as the decisive factor in their bids for power. As can be seen, a leadership based more on police force than Party consensus is likely to lead to uncertainty and instability rather than to positive change.

The re-emergence of Chernenko as Party leader after Andropov's death suggests that the Party apparatus, for which he is the spokesman, may try to reassert itself. Whether Andropov's KGB protégés whom he promoted during his brief period in power, and who had little time to consolidate their political positions, will be able to survive the new General Secretary cannot yet be surmised. But it is obvious that once again the equilibrium at the top is rather unsteady. Will they outlast Chernenko, as the new gerontocratic leader himself outlived Andropov?

[60] See Medvedev, *Andropov*, pp. 135–144, and Konstantin Simis, " Andropov's Anti-Corruption Campaign," in *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Summer 1983), pp. 111–121. It is significant that the KGB's public image has become increasingly prominent since Brezhnev's death. See, for example, a *Pravda* article (27 Oct. 1983, p. 4) which discusses letters from Soviet citizens who praise the KGB effusively and express their gratitude for the outstanding job it performs.

Andropov: A Retrospective View

Michel Heller

SCARCELY six months had passed since the election of Yurii Andropov as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, when the new photographs took us back to the last years of Brezhnev. Once again the leader of the Soviet superpower was being led by the arm, once again he could barely hold the text of his speech in his trembling hands. The shadow of illness loomed over Andropov's leadership.

Now that it has ended it is possible to evaluate his policies with some distance and see what has become of the hopes raised by the changing of the guard at the Kremlin, 15 months before Chernenko came to power to guard against change. The press, politicians and heads of state in the West had curiously been almost unanimous in hailing Andropov's election. The slightest details of his life and his past activity were suddenly all in his favour. His part in the crushing of the Budapest uprising was easily forgiven: did he not support the " Hungarian experience " afterwards? As for the 15 years spent at the head of the KGB, everyone thought that this was in fact the best possible preparation for high office, because at the KGB they " know everything."

Just as in 1953 and 1964, there was initially a period of " great hope," of anticipation of a new " liberal " policy by Andropov. It would include several clear points: in internal affairs, one or two " humanitarian " gestures would allow the new General Secretary to improve his " international standing "—Sakharov's return to Moscow, the release of Shcharansky, Orlov and other well-known detainees, widespread amnesty followed by economic reforms; in foreign affairs—withdrawal from Afghanistan, regularization of the situation in Poland, compromise with the West over SS-20 and Pershing missiles—in short, a return to *détente*.

This magnificent programme had only one drawback: it was conceived exactly as if the general secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU were a new president of the United States or France.

The programme prepared by the new General Secretary and read by him at the Plenum of the CC on 22 November 1982 was of a completely different order. Nor was it like those of his predecessors. After Lenin's death, all contenders for the succession promised to follow the policies of NEP; after Stalin's death, Malenkov and then Khrushchev announced a series of major reforms, especially in agriculture, and gave priority to light industry; Brezhnev also announced economic reforms. Yurii Andropov, however, declared firmly that he foresaw no fundamental modifications to existing policies.

In his speech at the November 1982 Plenum (which marked the beginning of the Andropov era and has already provided a wealth of

quotations), the new General Secretary acknowledged the " existence of certain difficulties " and admitted that, as " a series of important indications suggest," the " new five-year plan has not been fulfilled during the first two years of its implementation." To make up for these deficiencies, Andropov set out several " essential tasks ": " profitability of production," " rapid improvement in all areas of economic management," full use of the " considerable reserves at the disposal of our national economy." These empty and overworked clichés are telling: there was no real desire for far-reaching reforms (or at least it was known in advance that such reforms were impossible). The Party's main objective remained, as the new General Secretary declared, " concern for Soviet man, for the conditions of his life and work, and for his spiritual development."

THE first concrete measures taken following the Plenum can—with a little goodwill—be categorized as " concern for Soviet man." In his speech, Andropov clearly identified the problem. " The Politburo is concerned about the transport situation. The Ministry of Transport is still unable to meet the needs of the popular economy for transporting diesel, wood and other freights." The " other freights " are passengers. As soon as the problem was disclosed the General Secretary found a remedy: the Minister of Transport was relieved of his duties. " Human concern " equally dictated the first law adopted after Andropov's election: the " border law." Everyone knows that borders, as V. Fedorchuk said in proposing the law, are " a constant preoccupation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." The most secure borders in the world—of which the one in Berlin is a fine example—protect the land of " mature socialism." In Stalin's time, a formula was born: " Lock up the borders." It seemed as though a new law was not needed, since the situation was clear. However, concern for the spiritual and moral welfare of the Soviet citizen prompted the Party and the government to recall, in Article 28, paragraph 6, that " border troops should prevent importation into the USSR of all printed works, photographs, manuscripts, documents, recordings, video-cassettes, filmed documents and other works, both printed and visual, likely through their contents to damage the political and economic interests of the country, harm state security and public order and the health and morality of the population." Article 29 specifies that " border troops have the jurisdiction to confiscate, temporarily for verification, or permanently, the itemized documents. . ." Also, it is the *duty* of Soviet citizens, together with the state, social organizations and specially instructed individuals, to " participate actively in the defence of Soviet borders."

This new law amounted to the solemn burial (the ceremony took place during the session of the Supreme Soviet) of the third section of the Helsinki agreements. Prior to this, the agreements had not of course been respected, but from now on it became criminal even to want to respect

them. It should be pointed out that the new law pays homage to the scientific and technical revolution by mentioning video-cassettes as one of the forbidden items. In fact, its basic aim is to warn Soviet citizens that they should start being scared.

Soviet citizens have never really stopped trembling. But for a while, they had thought it was possible to be a little less afraid.

Andropov's first act had therefore been to set in motion the mechanism of fear in the Soviet consciousness. The keyword of the first year of the new era was " discipline." Every day, newspapers, radio and television repeated the essential demand: " The struggle for discipline in work and in the economy must be strengthened!" However, Andropov did not settle for words alone. He quickly decided to act: in every town, patrols of militia checked Soviet identity papers—in the middle of the day, in parks, public baths, cinemas. At the November Plenum, Andropov formulated the slogan: " The struggle against any breach of discipline must be intensified." With the help of the police and the law courts, Soviet citizens were expected to be at work during working hours, not queuing in shops, going to the cinema, to the baths or to the hairdresser. The Party and the government asked citizens to help them in this task: they were asked to denounce those who infringe the laws of discipline, who either work badly or not at all. This request, wrote *Literaturnaya gazeta* (No. 1, 5 Jan. 1983), has " aroused great interest." Letters of denunciation have flooded in.

On 19 January 1983, *Sovetskaya Rossiya* published a governmental decree from the RSFSR announcing the creation of " re-education centres " destined for " parasites," in other words, for alcoholics, drug addicts and other " anti-social elements." The RSFSR, known as the " first among equals," thus set an example for other Soviet republics, which will, in turn, be able to " reinforce discipline."

The change of personnel wrought by Andropov concerns the main bastions of the Soviet system. Geidar Aliev, aged 59, became a member of the Politburo and vice-president of the Soviet of Ministers (Tikhonov, the president, is 78). First Secretary of the CP in Azerbaijan, Aliev had worked for the Security Services from the age of 18, prior to working for the Party. As befits a high-flying Soviet civil servant, he has a diploma of higher education. His choice of studying " human sciences " shows his refinement: while he was in the KGB in Azerbaijan, he studied in the department of history at Baku. On 18 November 1981, Aliev gave a long interview in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, in which he recalls, in a picturesque way, the struggle he had against corruption in the republic, insisting that he had severely curtailed the luxurious tastes of the Azerbaijan *nomenklatura*.

There is no doubt that the nomination of a former Caucasian KGB employee of some importance was also designed to inspire fear. This is also the way in which the changes of head at the KGB and Ministry of Internal Affairs should be interpreted. Well-known for the cruelty with which he " took care " of Ukrainian dissidents, Vitali Fedorchuk only

spent seven months at the head of the KGB. His appointment to the Ministry of Internal Affairs was no doubt a setback for him, but it is now his job to combat " anti-socialist elements," to re-establish order and to reinforce discipline. On 25 January 1983 at the assembly of representatives from different sectors of the country (this assembly was of the whole USSR, attended by representatives of the Security Services and of the CC of the CPSU) " concrete measures were drawn up concerning the elimination of the inadequacies made apparent by the actions taken by the organs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs." The creation of " re-education centres " was the first result of this new policy of fear. On 17 December 1983, Victor Chebrikov was appointed head of the KGB; he had belonged to the " organization " since 1967 and had been its deputy-head since 1982.

Here too there have been several early results: arrests were made in various fields among believers, writers, scientists . . . By all appearances, they are seeking to suppress any display of ideas which are outside Party control, and to demonstrate the omnipotence of the Security Services. For instance, it is with this goal in mind that confiscations have been made repeatedly in the home of Georgii Vladimov, president of the Russian section of Amnesty International. Such victimization compelled Vladimov to request permission to leave the country. Immediately after leaving, the writer was deprived of his Soviet citizenship. This also explains why historian Roy Medvedev was summoned to the prosecutor's office in Moscow and warned that if he did not stop his activities " hostile to the regime " (that is, the publication of his historical works outside Russia), he would be subject to criminal proceedings. The assistant prosecutor, Oleg Soroka, went on to specify: " The fact that you have not been summoned here during these past 20 years only proves our immense patience. But our patience is running out. In 1983 it could finally reach its limit."

This warning to Roy Medvedev was all the more significant because the dissident historian had, since 1975, suggested that Andropov was the one, among the leaders of his time, who " best understood the problems of the intelligentsia " (*Observer*, 18 July 1982). The least one can say is that Medvedev was wrong. And Yurii Andropov himself had formulated his credo at the meeting celebrating the 60th anniversary of the October Revolution: " Let no one come and talk to us about humanism!"

The installation of the mechanism of fear was naturally accompanied by a tightening of the screws throughout the country. Lenin's prophetic words came true: " As long as there are exploiters in the world, the working class will never have power without this institution [the Cheka]." On 2 January 1983, page four of *Pravda* was almost completely taken up with a text by Yulian Semyonov called " The Return." *Pravda* rarely uses literature in its columns, and when it does, it is not for the love of Art. Semyonov dedicated all his work to the glory of the Cheka-KGB. The television serial made from his novel *Seventeen Moments of Spring* is the most famous adaptation ever shown on Soviet television. Issaev, the hero

of the film, is a Soviet agent who manages to infiltrate Himmler's entourage under the name of Stirlitz. He is the best representative of the Soviet " Services," a disciple of their founder Dzerzhinski. " The Return " shows Stirlitz *going back to Germany* at the end of the war after a short stay in Switzerland, where he received instructions from the Centre. The symbolic nature of the text is contained in the names of the people that Stirlitz remembers while on the way to Berlin. In fact, he only evokes Chekists of the Leninist school, Heroes of the Revolution and heroic individuals killed by Stalin during the Purges.

The good old days, the era of the stern but impartial " fist," are back with us again. This is the meaning of the text. The First Secretary of the CC of the PUWP, Jaruzelski, was not mistaken: did he not put flowers at the foot of Dzerzhinski's statue during his last visit to Moscow? Soviet citizens too, obviously understood this. The first joke dedicated to Andropov went as follows: " Yurii Vladimirovich, you are now our guide. But will the people march with you?" " Don't worry," replies Andropov, " if they won't march behind me, they will follow Brezhnev."

The evocations of the Stalinist era were necessary to provoke a reflex of fear in the population, but equally to make them feel more secure. Stalin left his successors a magnificent heritage: the level of repression was so high, and under Stalin's reign reached such fantastic proportions, that since then everything that is even only one cut below acquires the appearance of terror with a human face.

Once he had consolidated the apparatus of repression by placing his own men there, Andropov decided to replace the head of propaganda—an essential element of terror. These were the major actions taken by the General Secretary in matters of internal affairs during his first few months in office.

The CPSU Plenum which was held on 14–15 June 1983 affirmed the general line of Andropov's policies and underlined their continuity. In every newspaper article about the General Secretary that appeared in the West subsequent to the November Plenum, it was noted that the situation in the Soviet economy was critical and that it would be precisely this that would above all else occupy the Soviet leadership. The past year has confirmed Western experts' lack of understanding of Soviet problems and the risibility of their attempts to explain them rationally through analogy with the Western system.

MOST articles devoted to Andropov in the Western press agreed that, after his election, the economic situation in the USSR was so bad that the new " director " would make it his first priority. The problems of the Soviet economy are so incredible, so strange, that any attempt to give them a rational explanation produces absolutely grotesque results. Simply attempting to do so appears to drive mad those who dare. The CIA reports provide a remarkable example of these strange " attacks of delirium." For many years, the CIA accumulated reports from which it emerged that the Soviet economy was in a catastrophic

state. Yet now, this same CIA shows in 400 pages that the Soviet economy is prospering: " In spite of chronic problems, the Soviet Union is developing along satisfactory lines from an economic point of view, and the standard of living has risen over the last 30 years." What is most curious is that this conclusion was reached by using the same type of information as the previous reports. Alain Besançon is one of the few Sovietologists who understands that the Soviet economy is completely different from an " economy " in the traditional sense of the word. However, his *Anatomy of a Spectre*[1] did not reach the audience it deserved.

The debate that has for a while been filling the pages of Soviet newspapers is a perfect illustration of the " problems " of the Soviet " economy." We know that the USSR has been experiencing grain shortages over the past few years. One of the major solutions to this problem advocated by Soviet leaders was to cut down the bread consumption of Soviet citizens. In the Soviet Union, bread is made in large round loaves. The official guide-line suggests a " large percentage of water in the dough " (*Izvestia*, 21 Jan. 1983). Result: the bread dries out very quickly and the remains cannot be eaten. According to official statistics, 7–8 million tonnes of bread are thrown away every year (*Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 2, 1983). There is a simple logical solution: make " smaller " bread, that is, small round loaves. It is at this point that the mechanisms of the Soviet economy come into play: by producing less bread in order to economize on flour, the factory that makes the bread no longer fulfils the Plan!

A second example is presented in the weekly supplement to *Izvestia — Nedelya* (No. 14, 1983). *Izvestia*'s own correspondent revealed that there was food left on the plates of the patrons of restaurants and cafés in Tomsk. Having sampled the food, he stated:

> The food prepared there is unpalatable. In practically every café in the town the milk soup was burnt, the macaroni was stuck together with sauce and looked like an unappetising lump and the cheesecake looked as though it had been made with sawdust, even though the raw ingredients were of a perfectly reasonable quality.

The mystery of Tomsk's public eating places would forever have remained closed to Sherlock Holmes, Inspector Maigret and the other Titans of Western detective story logic. But the Soviet journalist uncovered the mystery immediately: all the town's restaurants and cafés had received the plan for their daily quota of leftovers to be delivered to the pig-breeding farms in the public catering sector; in order to fulfil the plan they began to prepare such unappetising food that even Soviet citizens, who are not used to refinement, refused to eat it. The most astonishing thing in this system is that the pigs, fattened up on these leftovers, are then sent to the same restaurants and cafés that continue to prepare food just as disgustingly as ever—so as to be able to fulfil the pig-swill plan.

[1] Cf. *Survey*, no. 113, Autumn 1980, Vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 143–59.

These two examples convincingly illustrate, as I see it, the essence of the system of planning in which the plan is above all an instrument of control over the workers. They explain why there was no mention of the economy at the June Plenum: reform of the economy demands a change in the system of planning first and foremost. The resolutions adopted at the Plenum on the contrary insist on the strengthening of this system.

In his very earliest speeches beginning in November 1982, Yurii Andropov expounded the thesis that received its final formulation at the June Plenum: the promise to complete the building of communism by 1980, contained in the 1961 Party Programme, " had not fully stood the test of time." In the new programme, whose basic points the General Secretary of the CC expounded in his speech, it will be written that " Soviet society finds itself on the threshold . . . of an historically long period. . . ." Yurii Andropov was not at all abandoning " historical optimism,"[22] he reaffirmed the inevitability of the victory of communism promised by the " laws of history "—but he warned that this will not happen tomorrow. Andropov stated: " the society we have built must not yet be considered complete." And he explained this by saying that Soviet people are not yet sufficiently " ideologically educated." Their education must be the foremost concern of the Party.

ALL the Plenum's resolutions are associated with this general line: that the Party must bolster, strengthen and broaden the education of the Soviet people, its control over them. Contrary to general expectations, the Plenum carried out no changes in the composition of the ruling bodies—with the important exception of the appointment of the former secretary of the Leningrad Obkom, G. Romanov, as a CC Secretary. Already a member of the Politburo, he went to " Room No. 1 " where Andropov, Chernenko and Gorbachev could be found—all of them CC secretaries and members of the Politburo at one and the same time.

The only concrete measure in the Plenum's resolution on " actual questions of mass ideological political work for the Party," was the creation of an All-Union Centre for the Study of Public Opinion. This decision must be seen in conjunction with the " second law of Andropov "—the law about labour collectives presented to the Supreme Soviet by Geidar Aliev and confirmed on the very same day.

The speeches at the CC Plenum, Aliev's report to the session of the Supreme Soviet, and the law about labour collectives are all an echo of the Polish events of 1980–83. The spectre of Solidarity has not vacated the halls of the Kremlin. The word " Poland " is missing from the

[2] " Historical optimism " also explains what a Soviet joke calls the " six paradoxes of our life ":

There is no unemployment, but no one is working.
No one is working, but production is increasing.
Production is increasing, but there is nothing in the shops.
The shops are empty, but no one is dying of hunger.
No one is dying of hunger, but no one is happy.
No one is happy, but everyone votes " Yes."

published texts of the speeches, but Andropov had the Polish events in mind when he indignantly stated: " How much, then, is the work of a trade union which does not dare raise its voice in defence of workers' interests worth? . . ." He had Poland in mind when he intoned: " When the leading role of the Communist Party is weakened, the danger arises of sliding towards a bourgeois reformist path of development."

Stressing that " the experience of socialist development in other countries demands attentive study and general evaluation " so as to strengthen the role of the Party in all walks of life and introduce " socialist self-government," Soviet ideologues have finally found the answer to the Polish workers' demand: instead of self-government, you have " real socialist self-government."

Socialist self-government, as Aliev explained, is constructed " on the basis of the tried and tested principle of democratic centralism, which allows the successful combination of the broad participation of the masses in government with one system of state management and planning." Aliev demonstrated the concrete meaning of this " successful combination " with some astonishing figures. In the debate on the Bill about labour collectives, he announced with pride, 110 million Soviet citizens took part (the population is approximately 268 million—*M.H.*) and they attended 1,230,000 meetings. Over 5 million people gave speeches at these meetings, and almost 130 amendments were proposed. " More than 70 amendments have been incorporated " into the draft Bill.

Andropov correctly observed that the law on labour collectives is the first such law in Soviet history. Its aim is to realise, as Aliev expressed it, " the great principle of collectivism." The labour collective is being presented in the legislative order " as the fundamental nucleus of socialist society." Supreme Soviet Deputy N. A. Novoselova, a machine-operator who spoke at the session, put it even better: " The labour collective has become for us the home, the hearth and the school-room of genuine human relations."

Konstantin Chernenko explained in his report the necessity for adopting this law. Summing up the results of 65 years' activity in the formation of Soviet Man—" an ideologically convinced, harmoniously developed and spiritually rich personality "—Chernenko conceded that " there is no basis for complacency." As he expressed it, the present Soviet citizen is suffering " from open sores." The CC Secretary urgently called for " the most energetic struggle against drunkenness, hooliganism and parasitism, speculation and the theft of socialist property, bribery and corruption," an interesting preoccupation in view of his present position.

The miracle-performing medicine for all these " sores " is, as it turns out, the labour collective. The state hands over the matter of educating the people into the hands of the people. As they say in the Soviet Union: the matter of saving drowning people is now in their own hands. The law presents the labour collectives with rights which are at the same time obligations: it is precisely these which differentiate socialist self-government from self-government.

The collective is given the right to discuss the enterprise's plans, the conditions of the health services there, the running of the housing construction financed by it, and the activities of the management. The collective can only discuss topics which are up for discussion—and that is decided by the management. The text of the law leaves no doubt: " at the head of the collective is the Party organization." A quadrilateral, consisting of the administration, the Party bureau, the union committee and the Komsomol committee, implements the powers of the collective on its behalf. All the angles of this strange geometric shape differ, but the widest is that of the Party bureau. Party organizations, stressed Aliev, have " a statutory right of control over the activities of the administration," which allows them " effectively to uncover and eliminate shortcomings at work." The right of " discussion " is a fictitious right, the essence of which was revealed during the discussion of the Bill.

The real law which has been imposed on the collectives consists in the restriction of rights for the members of the collective in order " to consolidate production ": in other words, to limit the possibility of changing jobs; " to choose the candidates for entry into institutes of higher education and technical colleges ": in other words, to limit young workers' chances of going to study; " to take care of the ideological-political education of its members ": to punish them for drunkenness and poor work. In addition to this, the collectives were given the right (and duty) " to execute retrospective planning " to support the subsidiary farms and to feed the workers, thus lifting this obligation from the shoulders of the state.

The compulsory attachment of Soviet workers to their place of work, made legal by the " second law of Andropov," so far affects town-dwellers only. In his speech, the then General Secretary announced the future merger of the *kolkhoz* with the *sovkhoz* " into a single, public enterprise; that is to say, the transformation of all *kolkhozniki* into workers in the agricultural sector, to which the law on labour collectives will be applied."

The " second law of Andropov " is a step along the road " to the great goal which has been described in the theory, and about which several generations of communists have only dreamed." This goal, which as Andropov said " has become a question of immediate practice for us today," " is the social homogeneity of society."

In the past years, Soviet ideologues have supplemented the concept (which appeared in the propaganda of the 1960s) " of a new historical community of people—of the Soviet nation " with that of " an organically integral social system," of " a homogeneous society." In this way leading Soviet theoreticians have reformulated the concept which saw the light in the 1920s: " *Volksgemeinschaft*," the totalitarian society.

IF the Western press had recently been praising Andropov's liberal, reformist side somewhat less than before, it doubled the number of compliments paid to his talents for diplomacy—and admired the finesse

of his ideas! The aim of strategy, said Clausewitz, is to win the war without engaging in battle. The man who can win such a victory undoubtedly deserves the title of great strategist, even if his adversary had resigned himself to defeat from the outset, before the opening of hostilities.

The flood of statistics inundating the Western press—the number of missiles, nuclear warheads, SS-20s, SS-5s, Pershing and cruise—has skilfully allowed the meaning and nature of the diplomatic battle, engaged in by Brezhnev and pursued by Andropov, to be disguised. However, the nature of this battle appears quite clearly when one realizes that the Soviet Union has obtained satisfaction in all the " sensitive " points: the SS-20s are in place, the Soviet army is occupying Afghanistan " normalization " is under way in Poland. The West begs the Soviet Union to take a step back, promising considerable recompense in exchange. The Soviets dominate the situation, watching the blundering enemy with contempt.

Supported by the most advanced Sovietologists, the West was hoping that the Soviet Union, assailed by its economic crisis, the endless war in Afghanistan and the Polish problem, would ultimately give in. The American Sovietologist Alexander Dallin commented in an interview in the Italian newspaper *Il Giornale* (21 June 1983): " Domestic problems will in the final account absorb the attention of the rulers in Moscow to such an extent that they will become more flexible in matters of foreign policy." But the CIA report has dashed hopes of an economic catastrophe in the Soviet Union. The war in Afghanistan—like that waged by Tsarist Russia in the Caucasus—could go on for 30 years or more; more especially as the war has no really concrete existence for the Soviet people (except for the victims' families). The Soviet press presents the events in Afghanistan as the struggle of a revolutionary people against gangs of Israeli-American mercenaries. " The Afghan soil burns with indignation and anger," declared the *Izvestia* correspondent in Kabul (8 Jan. 1983). He was speaking, of course, of the indignation of the " workers and ' dehkans,' of the clergy and the popular intelligentsia, shopkeepers and artisans, officials and soldiers in the Afghan army " in the face of " the direct intervention of American imperialism in the internal affairs of Afghanistan." As for Poland, it is no longer an immediate cause for anxiety in Moscow.

Although the Soviets eventually lost over the issue of the placement of American missiles in Europe, the battle itself has left them with certain political gains with regard to German attitudes. The question of the deployment of cruise and Pershing missiles in Western Europe had been singled out already by Brezhnev, who put it in the category of major battlefield for Soviet diplomacy. West Germany was chosen as the target of the main attack. The spectre of pacifism had taken a walk in Western Europe, helplessly coming to a stop at the border with the world of mature socialism. This spectre felt particularly at home in West Germany: not only the Greens, the evangelical Church and the Social Democratic Party, but also members of the Right, began to give it

succour. History testifies to the fact that conservative circles in Germany have often had an interest in specially good relations with the Soviet Union. In West Germany today agreement has been reached along the entire social and political spectrum to pursue friendly relations with Moscow (for *Der Spiegel*, which got an interview with Andropov, there was no doubt: " He has firmly embarked on the road to peace ") and to be suspicious, if not outrightly hostile, in relations with Washington. The bizarre interweaving of fear in the face of the bomb, of hopes for the unification of the two Germanies, of the activities of Soviet agents, of economic ties, propped up by the extension of multi-billion dollar credits and made lasting by anxiety over losing them, facilitated the business of Soviet diplomats quite remarkably.

" The battle for West Germany " will some day be studied by diplomatic historians as an example of " waging war by other means." The special feature of this battle consists in the fact that, even after cruise and Pershing missiles have been deployed, Soviet diplomacy and propaganda could go on trying to turn them into festering thorns in the side of Western Europe.

THE first year of the Andropov era revealed a fundamental fact about the policy of the leader: the war goes on. The first steps taken were aimed at strengthening the home front and undermining the enemy. Soviet newspapers, which tirelessly repeat the same slogans, have been using a new headline with increasing frequency these past few months: " The Purifying Wind of Revolution." According to the heads of Soviet propaganda, this wind is today sweeping across the entire planet—from Namibia to El Salvador to the Yemen, from Angola to Ethiopia and Nicaragua.

Soviet foreign policy today is based on a geopolitical premise that the planet Earth is divided into a Soviet and a non-Soviet world, between which stretches " the twilight zone." The theoretical foundation of Soviet foreign policy has been developed comparatively recently in the so-called " philosophy of peace." The " philosophy of peace " declares that war is not necessary to the Soviet Union, for the victory of socialism on a world scale is not in doubt, it is all just a question of time. The USSR, which is for peace and promotes the inauguration of the era of universal peace, not only has the right, but a duty to advance into " the twilight zone " and expand the Soviet world. Therefore, while the publisher of the American journal *Foreign Policy*, Charles V. Mines, affirmed that the USA had no " vital interests in Central America " (*International Herald Tribune*, 30 June 1983), Yurii Andropov announced the inclusion in the new CPSU Programme of the point concerning " the growing role of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, freeing themselves from colonial or semi-colonial dependence." Andrei Gromyko expressed this in routine terms: " Today, as always, we consider it our international duty to support the liberation movements of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America . . . " (*Pravda*, 17 June 1983).

The " philosophy of peace " supports the expansion of the Soviet world by presenting " the liberation movements " as an action of a peaceful character. To supplement the terminology of " just " and " unjust " wars, used for so long by Soviet ideologues, the theoreticians of the " philosophy of peace " have introduced the terms " just " and " unjust " peace. Unjust peace is a peace in which there is no war, but Soviet ideologues consider that this is not sufficient. The Soviet Union is for a " just " peace, a " universal peace which excludes war between states as a means of achieving the goal of social reconstruction, but preserves the field for class struggle within an antagonistic society, for social revolution and national liberation." " Just " peace is the one that " goes hand in hand with social progress," the one that promotes the victory of socialism over the whole world. In this way, " the chief, most universal and all-embracing factor for peace is constituted by the superiority of the socio-political forces of peace over the forces of war," and, above all, the superiority of the Soviet armed forces of peace over the " forces of war " (*Voprosy filosofii*, No. 12, 1982).

Expanding on the theme of the " philosophy of peace," Admiral Sorokin, First Deputy of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy, formulated the four tasks that confront the Soviet armed forces today: " the defence of the borders of the socialist state; the defence of the borders of the socialist camp; assistance to the peoples of the countries in the process of liberation; the defence of peace all over the world " (*Voprosy filosofii*, No. 2, 1983). The first two functions have long been well-known to us; the third got its notoriety at the beginning of the 1970s—its apotheosis was the intervention in Afghanistan; the fourth was formulated in its present form quite recently: it can be tested in " the soft underbelly of the USA "—Central America.

The " philosophy of peace " lies at the base of the USSR's foreign policy, as well as of its domestic policy. The chief goal of all Andropov's domestic policy actions, their " overriding task," to use Stanislavsky's favourite expression, was the strengthening of the home front. Andropov was not worried by the " financial crisis " in the Soviet economy, so alarming to his Western observers, for such a crisis hardly existed for him. Totalitarian power allows the use of all available means in the directions necessary to achieve its aims and to overcome the existing bottle-necks in the strategic branches of the economy. The " parallel economy," tolerated by the government, controlled and limited by repression, permits all the other branches of the economy to exist. Declaring as its task the satisfaction only " of the rational demands of the population " (K. Chernenko), the Soviet government has created a system of " controlled shortages," while the West provides the Soviet Union with grain, technology and the necessary credits. Under these conditions, leaving the capitalists and Western Sovietologists to worry about the Soviet economy, Andropov concentrated all his efforts on waging cold war conflict.

Gradually, the Western image of Yurii Andropov as a jazz fan and a

" closet liberal " began to be doubted. His tough statement (*Pravda*, 29 Sept. 1983) after the shooting down of the Korean airliner, a statement declaring that Soviet allegations about its " spying mission " had been " proved," reminded one of the Moscow Trials period, even though President Reagan could not be compelled to " confess." But the Western " progressives' " capacity for wishful thinking is so inexhaustible that even amidst the universal condemnation of the barbaric Soviet action they found new ways of rationalizing their (usual) attitude of self-abnegation. The invasions of Russia by Charles XII, Napoleon and Hitler, were once again duly invoked. Jonathan Sanders, deputy director of the Columbia University Institute for Russian Studies, even said that Russia was invaded in the First World War (*Montreal Gazette*, 13 Sept. 1983). Alexander Chancellor in the *Sunday Express*, 2 Oct. 1983, quoted a rather obvious observation by Mrs Thatcher about the Soviet leaders (" They do not share our aspirations, they are not constrained by our ethics, they always considered themselves exempt from the rules that bind other states "), and gravely asked whether " it is wise to abuse the Russians so intemperately?" The *Guardian* editorial of 30 Sept. 1983 expressed a similar concern: " If any 'expansionist empire' is truly 'evil,' then how can one seriously engage in negotiations involving an element of trust?" In the light of Soviet history, " an element of trust " in Andropov may not have been a very persuasive argument, but on the following day (1 Oct. 1983) the *Guardian* editorial added a note of a peculiarly symmetrical scepticism about " Mr Andropov's limping self-defence or the claims of Mr Reagan and Mrs Thatcher to embody a supreme morality." This Olympian equidistance permits one to stay *au dessus de la mêlée*, without facing the problem of Soviet behaviour.

But other voices expressed stronger concern. Seymour Weiss asked some pertinent questions in the *Wall Street Journal* (26 Sept. 1983). Referring to the series of Soviet actions, from Afghanistan to Syria and Central America, from the Soviet submarine intrusions into Scandinavian waters to the shooting down of the Korean aircraft, he expressed the matter differently:

> Rather than seeing in this range of Soviet military aggressions a series of miscalculations and mishandling by inept Soviet officials, is it not possible that the Soviets are pursuing, with vigour, an uninterrupted policy of expansion of world influence? . . . It is not implausible to suspect that the Soviet leadership is becoming increasingly aware that its massive effort of the past five decades to surpass the US military in both nuclear and conventional strength ought properly to have a political pay-off. In Soviet psychology being the strongest guy on the block is never having to say you are sorry.

Similarly, the denunciations by some politicians and newspapers of Western criticism of Soviet behaviour as a new " holy crusade " against communism were effectively answered in *The Times* editorial of 1 Oct. 1983:

> We are and have been in a war of words, as the Prime Minister said, for the hearts and minds of societies which are still free. In this war the Soviet leadership maintains its ideological intention to prosecute the struggle against the enemies of socialism, while the western societies—the intended victims of this conflict—are not supposed to answer back.
>
> The period of *détente* came to be seen in the West as a suspension of hostilities while to Soviet eyes it was never anything of the kind. The Soviet leadership never made any secret of the fact that the conflict between the systems was to continue, but by other means. The West, however, decided that *détente* meant that the conflict was over. Western leaders gave up the struggle. They gave it up politically; they gave it up morally. What other conclusion can be drawn from a period in which it remained acceptable for the Soviet leadership and all its communist affiliates in the West to continue the ideological attack on western society, but not acceptable for western society to answer back in kind, even by the simple assertion of the positive case for free and democratic societies?

Ernst Genri (Semyon Nikolaevich Rostovsky), former Comintern and intelligence agent who is now but a German specialist, recently wrote: " 1983 is barely distinguishable from 1933. The only difference is that today everything happens under the control of NATO and the Pentagon " (*Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 3, 1983). The war does indeed go on. But the outcome is clear, for the laws of history have passed judgment: the capitalist world has been condemned. Following this logic, the world of real socialism, propelled by " historical optimism," should win the day. The goal is there, within reach, and the conquest of another bastion of imperialism is only one step away.

JUST over a year in power is sufficient to appraise the emergence of an individual style, to observe its stamp on the form of leadership, if not on the nature of policies. Yurii Andropov confounded all great expectations. Everything—apart from a few minor details—has stayed the same. The Andropov " era " has confirmed that no one is able or even wishes to change anything of substance. This demonstration of the peculiarities of the system—internally immovable and irrepressibly expansionist on the outside—is particularly convincing, since the late General Secretary—like his predecessor—was in ill health. Sovietologists can today compare the policies of the USSR in the years when Brezhnev was well, and when he was ailing; when Andropov was well (at any rate, at first glance), and when he was ill. They may even notice a pattern: Lenin was ill for a long time and remained behind the wheel of state; Stalin was undoubtedly ill for a long time before his death. Hence, there is not only a tradition of the " ill *vozhd*'," but also a tendency for the ill health of the general secretary not to affect the strength of the system, reflected in its outward expansion. Even if one cannot introduce a general rule, that the more ill the general secretary, the stronger the Soviet Union, one can draw this conclusion: the mechanism of the system as it is at present can

operate even with a sick man at the helm. This is demonstrated by the ease with which the election of a new general secretary took place in November 1982, and again in February 1984. There were troubles over the search for an heir to Lenin, significantly less dramatic (and not so bloody) during the search for Stalin's heir; a palace revolution (a special session of the Central Committee Plenum) was in order for the election of Brezhnev. Andropov quietly moved over from one office to the other, as did Chernenko after him.

This is also confirmed by the new nominations at the December 1983 CC Plenum, as well as by the continuing " mini-purge " at the lower and middle levels of the Party and state administration (during Andropov's time as leader, 20 per cent of the oblast Party secretaries were replaced). Although Andropov's position appeared to have been strengthened by these changes, the shift in the Politburo balance did not prevent the nomination of Chernenko as the new General Secretary. Successful as they may have been in this matter, the former Brezhnev men were unable to prevent the earlier emergence of a new team which now includes not only Romanov, Gorbachev and Dolgikh, but also the newly promoted Vorotnikov, Ryzhkov, Ligachev and Chebrikov. Whatever their eventual success or failure in the struggle for the next succession, there can be little doubt that they are going to use the period of new, again perhaps " part-time " leadership to consolidate their own positions and to prevent the Brezhnev gerontocrats, now staging a comeback, from eliminating them from the race.

The Andropov " era," lasted 15 months. The election of the new General Secretary, Konstantin Chernenko—three years older than his predecessor and in only slightly better health—indicates that the transitional period has not ended. The old guard of iron gerontocrats, the ruling nucleus of the Politburo, has decided to hang on to power to the very last, until such time as the next generation of rulers has finally come to maturity. The election of Chernenko has at the same time shown which problems of the Soviet system the Politburo considers really important. Andropov's place has been filled not by an economic specialist, as several biographers of the former KGB chief suggested, but by a very old propagandist and professional ideologue. In the official biography of Chernenko it says that his first job as a leader was when he was in charge of the department of propaganda and agitation in the Komsomol regional committee in Siberia. That was in 1929.

For the first time the General Secretary does not have a past of revolutionary struggle, of participation in the struggle against the opposition or in the war with Germany. The source of his legitimacy is Soviet ideology and the Party apparatus led by it. Hegel said that everything real is rational. Mikhail Suslov, not long before his death, stated: " Reality consists only of what the Party deems to be rational." There will be nothing left for Chernenko's heirs to add to this law of the Soviet system.

The shadow of illness over the Andropov interlude may extend to

Chernenko's span of leadership. The career of the second generation of Soviet leaders is drawing to a close. A third generation is now coming on to the scene, upon whom our ineradicable optimists are again pinning their hopes. There is every reason to believe that these optimists will be deceived once again. The time is coming of Soviet leaders who were born, brought up and who rose to the top in the Soviet era. They are cut off by an unbridgeable gulf from the " other," non-Soviet world. They never knew Old Russia, with all the shortcomings of a normal statehood; they do not know—and do not wish to know—the modern non-Soviet world. Indistinguishable, worn smooth like pebbles on the beach, for them there exist only Soviet norms, conceptions, categories, idioms. Bukharin at the end of the 1920s called Stalin a Genghis Khan with a telephone. The Soviet Union has come a long way in the past 60 years and the Soviet system has reached cruising speed—now Genghis Khans have electronic computers.

Andropov Scrutinized

Iain Elliot

EVEN before Yurii Vladimirovich Andropov had completed a year in office as CPSU General Secretary there was speculation in the West about his state of health and about who would succeed him. Soviet citizens tend to be less interested in leadership changes, since they realize that it will take more than a new man at the top to bring radical improvements to the system that controls their lives. Nonetheless Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev all managed to stamp their individual mark on Soviet society. It is certainly worth examining the background and personality of Andropov to see some indications of the nature of his policies which his successor will either continue or try to modify.

Among the first to produce detailed accounts of the life and times of Yurii Andropov were two *émigré* Russian writers, Zhores Medvedev[1] and Ilya Zemtsov.[2] A scientist known in the West for his earlier works exposing the pseudo-genetics of T. D. Lysenko and analysing the nuclear disaster which occurred in the Urals in the 1950s, Zhores Medvedev himself experienced Andropov's authority: briefly incarcerated in a psychiatric hospital for his dissident activities, he was exiled from the USSR in 1973 and now lives in London. His twin brother, Roy Medvedev, a dissident Marxist historian still living in Moscow, helped him with material and suggestions. Ilya Zemtsov is a sociologist and political scientist who has lived in Israel since 1973. While directing the Sociological Information Centre in Baku he was associated with Geidar Aliev, who in November 1983 became a full member of the Politburo and first deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers.

Both authors can therefore claim some inside knowledge of the system which produced their subject but since neither has personal experience of life at the top of the Party apparatus, they have relied largely on secondary sources, official and unofficial. The authors and publishers are to be congratulated on their speed of production, although both books unfortunately suffer from over hasty proof-reading. (Nikolai Ryzhkov, elected to the secretariat in November 1982, appears repeatedly in Medvedev's account as " Ryshkov "—see, e.g. p. 116.) Zemtsov includes material up to April 1983, mentioning the death of Pelshe, 1 June 1983, in a footnote, while Medvedev takes us to February 1983.

THE question of sources is particularly crucial in the arcane field of Kremlinology and neither book is fully satisfactory in this respect,

[1] Zhores Medvedev, *Andropov*, published by Basil Blackwell (Oxford, 1983), £7·50.

[2] Ilya Zemtsov, *Andropov: Policy Dilemmas and the Struggle for Power*, published by the Israel Research Institute of Contemporary Society (Jerusalem, 1983).

even when it is not a matter of protecting the safety of an informant. Medvedev, for example, tells us:

> Brezhnev is said to have died during breakfast, after leaving the room to get something from his study. His wife, who remained in the dining room, began to worry when he did not return after several minutes. She found him lying unconscious on the floor of his study and she immediately raised the alarm (p. 20).

This is amazing inside information. Was it the *kasha* which did for him? Perhaps the privacy of Leonid Brezhnev's last minutes need not become the subject of public debate. But it would be valuable to be given some indication of how Medvedev learned that Marshal Ustinov proposed Andropov for general secretary at the special meeting of the Politburo held at 4.00 p.m. on 10 November, and how he knows that Chernenko was promised the post of President (p. 21).

In the same way one would like to be told how Zemtsov knows that Kirilenko " fiercely hated Chernenko " (p. 83) while Ustinov and Shcherbitsky merely " found Chernenko burdensome "? Or that in Andropov's flat there were Glen Miller records, stylish Hungarian furniture and a novel by Harrison Salisbury?

> Breakfast is always served in the continental style with French salads; only whiskey [*sic*] and cognac, not vodka, are served there . . . It is clear that Andropov is a thoughtful man, profound and sophisticated (p. 40).

In fact most of the information available in the West about Andropov's private life was highly suspect.[3] And indeed, both Zemtsov and Medvedev rightly dismiss Andropov's pretensions to being a secret liberal, while acknowledging that he is more sophisticated and " intellectual " than most Soviet leaders.

In examining Andropov's role as ambassador in Hungary during the rising, Zemtsov relies heavily on Western newspaper stories, while Medvedev takes issue with the Western media, arguing that they greatly exaggerate Andropov's responsibility for the arrest and execution of the Hungarian leaders:

> Andropov probably knew what was going to happen, but Hungary was an occupied country and the Soviet army was in control. Major operations, like the arrest of Nagy, could not be undertaken without a personal directive from Khrushchev or from the Soviet Party Presidium (p. 39).

Zemtsov accepts that Andropov was involved in the arrest and execution of the Hungarian Minister of Defence, General Pal Maleter, while Medvedev dismisses the account of Andropov's hypocritical behaviour as a " fabrication," pointing out that the general was not shot until 1958, after Andropov's departure. For Medvedev, the Soviet ambassador was

[3] For more detailed discussion of this aspect see *Soviet Analyst*, Vol. 11, No. 23, 24 Nov. 1982, and " The Andropov File " by Edward Jay Epstein, in *The New Republic*, 7 Feb. 1983.

the obedient servant of the regime, while Zemtsov describes him as playing a more active role:

> By manipulating the KGB and Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the help of support he drew from the Central Committee, Andropov in effect obtained complete freedom of action in Budapest. Neither before nor afterwards had a Soviet ambassador been granted such independence.

Again the evidence is thin and contradictory; it can be presented in such a way as to support either thesis. Yet the repression of the Hungarian rising was clearly a brutal, dishonourable affair in which Andropov played an important part enthusiastically enough to be promoted to head the Central Committee department dealing with socialist countries. It was at this stage that, according to Medvedev, the sophisticated Andropov exerted a beneficial influence in the area of genetic research, opposing the disastrous influence of Lysenko.

In the 1960s Zhores Medvedev helped his brother Roy produce the useful clandestine *Political Diary* which analysed political trends and earned him the reputation of having " inside " sources of information. This has not, however, helped to produce any really significant revelations in Medvedev's account of Andropov. We are told that his 15 years as head of the KGB (1967–82) promoted his advancement. The KGB exaggerated the problem of dissent, creating difficulties for Brezhnev while emphasizing its own importance. There is " no hard evidence," according to him, that Andropov is personally responsible for KGB excesses. This may or may not be true, but, as in the case of Hungary, it does not exonerate him from blame, since there is no evidence that he did anything to reduce his organization's excesses.

There is much evidence, however, for Andropov's skill in spreading disinformation. Medvedev gives a good analysis of how Andropov used the KGB to weaken Brezhnev's position and enhance his own power, but he is less satisfactory in discussing KGB disinformation strategy in the West, an area in which that organization made considerable efforts under Andropov's direction.

APART from attempting to satisfy the normal curiosity of the Western public, describing the character and background of the late Soviet leader was justified largely in terms of how far it shed light on the contemporary and future policies of the USSR. In domestic policy Medvedev stressed the new hard line aimed at stamping out political dissent and economic corruption. For natural family reasons he devoted more space to the Procurator-General's formal warning to Roy Medvedev in January 1983 to cease his " anti-Soviet activities " than he did to cases where those more strongly opposed to the regime received long prison sentences. In this respect Zemtsov is more critical and more informative, drawing on the rich *samizdat* material available in *émigré* Russian publications.

Both books offer useful insights into the murky waters of Kremlin factionalism, agreeing that in his first months as General Secretary Andropov failed to reorganize the Politburo to give himself full control of the regime. Zemtsov presents an astute analysis of the political problems which made it impossible for Andropov's hesitant economic reforms to succeed. In the USSR political stability invariably takes higher priority than economic efficiency, but if the slow-down in industrial growth continues, the security of the regime will be increasingly difficult to maintain. In this respect Medvedev is only slightly less pessimistic:

> Current policy is probably better constructed, better implemented, more skilfully presented, but it is still *the same conservative policy without any sign of liberal or democratic trends*. However, the very fact that it is more flexible, more efficient, and more decisive may stimulate reforms, as soon as experience proves that the demand for better discipline (the slogan of the day) is not enough to bring about lasting improvement (p. 197).

Certainly by August Andropov was admitting that: " Not infrequently we resorted to half measures and could not overcome the accumulated inertia fast enough . . . Now we must make up for what we have lost."[4] An experiment aimed at decentralizing the management of the economy was planned to begin in January 1984 in selected sectors of engineering and light industry.[5] However, the " accumulated inertia " was such that a year after he became General Secretary his anti-corruption campaign and efficiency drive were both running out of steam, and anyway Andropov himself was cancelling public engagements on grounds of ill health.

It is in their predictions of likely trends in Soviet foreign policy, and in their recommendations to the West, that Zemtsov and Medvedev differ most. Neither Andropov's empty offers in the disarmament negotiations nor his refusal to apologize or pay compensation for the destruction of the Korean airliner were such as to justify Medvedev's claim that " in the realm of foreign policy he has contributed to the cause of world peace " (p. 200). Medvedev comes out strongly against the deployment in Western Europe of cruise and Pershing 2 missiles. He predicts that deployment will make the introduction of Soviet cruise missiles into East Germany and Czechoslovakia inevitable. " This will be a complicated task, because these countries have no Soviet missiles at present and installing them could provoke a genuine anti-nuclear movement " (p. 177). In fact, both countries already had Soviet missiles and despite widespread protests, Moscow proceeded with new deployments; the authority ruthlessly suppressed any incipient anti-nuclear movements.

In this respect Zemtsov's analysis appears more sound. He does not believe that the USSR has a precise blueprint for conquering the world, but emphasizes that it will take advantage of any political vacuum to expand its influence. He gives convincing examples of this, and stresses

[4] *Pravda*, 16 Aug. 1983.
[5] *Pravda*, 26 July 1983.

the importance of the NATO rearmament programme. He concludes that since the USSR respects only force, the West must maintain its strength, combining military might with a persistent search for peace.

ANDROPOV IN POWER[6] is a particularly thorough biography, written in a clean, readable style by Jonathan Steele, chief foreign correspondent of *The Guardian*, and well researched by Eric Abraham, assisted by several expert interviewers and Sovietologists. As producer of the excellent BBC *Panorama* television documentary, shown within days of Andropov's succession, Abraham had access to much original material in the form of interviews with Hungarian and Soviet officials who met Andropov at various stages in his career. The blending of journalistic skills and specialist knowledge has resulted in a very timely account; it is a remarkable publishing feat for a book covering events to the end of September to appear in November—and with few misprints. However, the death of their subject has made the book no longer topical.

The authors comment on what little is known about the " real Andropov "—his personality and his family life—and, most important, say where the information comes from. His daughter Irina, Deputy Chief Editor of the magazine *Musical Life*, is married to the actor Mikhail Filippov; his son Igor, who is married and had given the late General Secretary two grandchildren, managed to achieve the ambition of most Party leaders' offspring: his work allows him to travel in the West. When in Madrid for the CSCE follow-up conference in the summer of 1983 he said that his mother, Tatyana, was still alive, despite persistent rumours to the contrary. As we now know she appeared at Andropov's funeral.

On the subject of the state of the leading politician's health, the Soviet media were also reluctant to divulge any information. Andropov failed to appear in public for months, yet an early official release claiming that he had a cold was allowed to stand without further elaboration, despite much speculation in the USSR and abroad. Steele writes of the US team of doctors known as the " ghoul squad " who attempt to assess the health of Soviet leaders from the flimsy evidence available, and says in his conclusion that Andropov " is likely to remain in charge for several years longer " (p. 205). But that was written before Andropov failed to appear with the other leaders on the Mausoleum in Red Square to mark the anniversary of the October Revolution, and was unable, for " temporary causes," to attend the CPSU Plenum in December. We know the outcome.

Among the interesting early materials discovered by the book's researchers is a local Soviet newspaper report of February 1950[7] voicing criticism of mismanagement by Party officials; Andropov, then a Party secretary in Karelia, admitted that he had " violated inner-party democ-

[6] Jonathan Steele and Eric Abraham, *Andropov in Power*, published by Martin Robertson (Oxford, 1983), £9·95.

[7] *Leninskoe Znamya*, Petrozavodsk, 17 Feb. 1950.

racy and flouted the rights of other communists " (p. 42). There is a useful discussion of Andropov's role in Hungary in 1956. An interview with Gyorgy Marosan, then a member of the Hungarian Politburo, reveals the Soviet ambassador as " holding the strings " and acting as a puppet-master. Steele and Abraham conclude that Andropov must have been lying when he told the Hungarian leaders that Soviet troops were being withdrawn rather than preparing to intervene. The head of the Hungarian National Guard, General Bela Kiraly, found Andropov hypocritical and calculating, " like some kind of boa constrictor ready to swallow its prey " (p. 60). The book maintains that Andropov's role declined after the invasion and that he was unlikely to have played any special part in enticing Nagy from the Yugoslav Embassy so that he could be arrested and executed.

When Andropov returned to Moscow he clearly enjoyed the patronage of the chief ideologist Mikhail Suslov, but there seems little support for the book's claim that he differed with his patron on the issue of de-Stalinization, or that he " opposed a return to more repressive measures of control " (p. 67). His later career would suggest the opposite. Under Andropov discussion of the " negative aspect " of Stalin's character was further suppressed while some particularly crude methods of control reappeared. Steele and Abraham write of the " generally moderate line of the KGB " during Andropov's 15-year rule (p. 95). Of course everything is relative; there were certainly fewer excesses than under Stalin's appointees, but " moderate " still seems an inappropriate word for that organization, which during Brezhnev's quest for *détente* with the West had to conform with the general effort of the Soviet authorities to appear more civilized to the rest of the world. The increased repression of Soviet dissidents which followed the invasion of Afghanistan was a better indication of the real KGB line favoured by Andropov.

THE discussion of Andropov's foreign policy relies more on secondary sources than the biographical sections, but is thorough and up to date. Not every reader though will be happy with the authors' comparison of KGB and CIA activities, nor with their conclusion that the tradition of isolationism in the USSR might lead to some reversion to a " Fortress Russia " policy with a strategy of " defensive confrontation " towards the United States. There have been a remarkable number of forays from the fortress, and indeed the line of defence is far beyond the borders of Russia. One might question the claim that Southern Africa and Central America have " little geopolitical interest for the Soviet Union " (p. 199). And it is misleading to talk of a " new frankness " in the Soviet media about Afghanistan (p. 195). Under Brezhnev there was little mention of Soviet casualites, and under Andropov the reporting was still aimed at concealing the extent of the Soviet military involvement.

In their discussion of recent Sino-Soviet talks, the authors mention in

passing that one of the changes made in the latest collection of Yurii Andropov's speeches in English translation[8] is to omit some of the Soviet leader's stronger criticisms of the Chinese leaders. Such changes do not help Pergamon's claim in their publicity hand-out that this comprehensive collection is " designed as a useful reference for all those who need to know, understand, interpret and anticipate the broad outline of possible Soviet policies at home and abroad." Nor is this a good advertisement for the collection of speeches by Chernenko, the publication of which was accelerated by Pergamon when Chernenko became the new Party Secretary. Anyway, in both cases, it is an expensive way of acquiring speeches originally made available in English by Novosti at a charge of a few pennies.

Jonathan Steele's *World Power*[9] is largely a discussion of Soviet foreign policy under Brezhnev, with some additions to cover the Andropov succession. He argues that the USSR is no longer " remorselessly expanding " and that it acted in Afghanistan out of fear for Soviet security (p. xi). He states:

> The whole concept of Soviet " adventurism " and " expansionism " needs to be reexamined. Do these words accurately describe reality or are they merely labels of abuse? One of the central conclusions of this book is that Soviet moves described as " adventurist " have often been low-risk policies, cautiously arrived at and in some cases internationally approved by a majority of the world community. As for expansionism, this may be nothing more sinister than the normal search for diplomatic and political influence that other states also follow. (p. 254)

It would be splendid if this were really the case. Unfortunately this book's research is not as strong as the author's opinions. He says for example that Castro, not Brezhnev, took the initiative in Angola and that there is no evidence that Moscow encouraged the Vietnamese to invade Kampuchea in 1978. The evidence of Moscow's economic and military aid to Cuba and Vietnam is clear enough, however, and the Soviet leaders, had they disapproved of their protégés' actions, could quickly have discouraged them. Most of Steele's other arguments about issues of Soviet foreign policy have the same flavour of special pleading.

[8] Y. V. Andropov, *Speeches and Writings*, second, enlarged edition, published by Pergamon Press (Oxford, 1983), £14·00.

[9] Jonathan Steele, *World Power: Soviet Foreign Policy under Brezhnev and Andropov*, published by Michael Joseph (London, 1983), £14·95.

Andropov Observed

Michel Heller

THE first biography of Stalin was written in 1931, nine years after the election of the " marvellous Georgian " as General Secretary, by the Soviet diplomat, S. Dmitrievsky, who remained in the West. Boris Souvarine's *Stalin*, the best of the biographies of the *Vozhd'*, came out only in 1935. Not even a year had passed since the election of Yurii Andropov as General Secretary when no less than five biographies of him appeared. " Andropology," if not a science, was the art of writing and publishing books at the speed of lightning. This phenomenon alone is proof of progress not only in comparison with Stalinist times, but also with the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras when no more than two or three, and one biography respectively, were published. Now it is the turn of Chernenko.

Books with Andropov's name on the title page have turned out to be both very simple and very difficult to write. Simple, because after the election of the former KGB chief as General Secretary, an immeasurable quantity of newspaper and magazine column inches assaulted the Western reader. This material became the basis for biography. A vicious circle was born, sired by the mass media communications network. The articles by Western journalists and experts were based above all on the evidence of dissidents, and on information received in Moscow; the main source of information for the dissidents is Western radio stations, which broadcast the reports of Western journalists received in Moscow. It was evidently difficult to write about Andropov, since his biographies provoke significantly more questions than they provide answers.

FROM the stream of biographies of the late General Secretary, one biography of Andropov* stands out as the most serious. The first section of the book affords special interest. It is devoted to the beginnings of Andropov's career—his early years in Volgostroi, his activities in the Karelo-Finnish republic, his close association with the (security) " organs " in the years of the Stalin purges and during the war. Beichman and Bernstam make successful use of the comparatively rich memoir material, above all of the memoirs of Patolichev and Kupriyanov. The second section of the biography, in which mainly newspaper articles and official texts have been used, raises objections over the interpretation of sources.

Wishing to explain the " irresistible (resistible only sometimes and for short periods) rise " of Yurii Andropov, the authors introduce the concept of a " Brotherhood "—an underground organization of mutual assistance and support which incorporated Party and state leaders of the

* Arnold Beichman and Mikhail S. Bernstam, *Andropov. New Challenge to the West*, with an introduction by Robert Conquest, published by Stein & Day (New York, 1983).

second Stalin Enrolment. Even Stalin, to a certain degree, becomes a puppet of the " Brotherhood." However, they include in the " Brotherhood " only those who made a career for themselves. For confirmation of these " special connections " they painstakingly follow the lives of those activists who interest them, deducing from this that joint service in the army, the oblast, or the embassy creates a friendship that cannot be broken, a " brotherhood." Working together is a necessary condition for intimacy, but by no means is it sufficient: Soviet history testifies to this with countless examples. When the authors venture on to the unsteady ground of supposition, interpretation, conjecture and extrapolation, everything becomes at once possible and doubtful. They write, for example: " It is possible that Kennedy's success [in forcing Khrushchev to remove the Soviet missiles from Cuba] gave Suslov the opportunity of getting Andropov on to the Central Committee " (p. 172). Possible, yes and possible, no.

" Microscopic " analysis of the Soviet system, focusing attention on the biographical particulars of Soviet officials, obstructs the exposure of the specifics of the Soviet system, of its peculiarities.

The authors' opinion, for example, that the Soviet Union in the 1980s will be in acute need of a good economic specialist, an agricultural expert, in the position of general secretary, is dubious. There is every reason to suggest that such a need will arise only in the event of the collapse of the Soviet system. In the contrary case, it will be in need, as it was previously, of an experienced Party functionary, preferably with the additional expertise gained from working in the (security) " organs " or on the " ideological front." Andropov fulfilled the first condition; Chernenko fulfills the second.

The Limits to Growth in Socialism*

Peter Knirsch

TWELVE years ago the Club of Rome published its most famous and influential study to that date—*The Limits to Growth*.[1] For better or for worse, the study greatly changed Western thought. It is true that, during the decades prior to the publication of this report, the belief in progress which both formed the basis of and resulted from the capitalist system with its industrial economy had already been questioned by many authors—from Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* to the depressing visions of the future presented by writers such as Aldous Huxley, there was no lack of pessimistic predictions about the future of mankind. Experiences gathered from two horrible world wars and ruthless totalitarian systems fostered pessimistic philosophies such as nihilism and existentialism. Nevertheless, just after the Second World War, a period of quickly-achieved reconstruction successes, " economic miracles " and rapid technological development, this pessimism was probably largely limited to intellectual circles, while in much of society the belief in progress was still strong.

But now the Club of Rome report made an impressive case, based on claims supported by scientific research, for the conclusion that the resources of this planet are limited, that vast segments of our rapidly-shrinking world are characterized by hunger and poverty, and that human inventiveness, scientific and technical progress, cannot at any time in the future guarantee continued economic growth or, what is more, extend the wealth of the developed industrial nations to the world as a whole. As problematic as many parts of this Club of Rome analysis might have been because of the methods employed and results obtained, the conclusions of the study gained widespread public attention, rather like that attracted by the law of population growth proposed by Malthus 170 years earlier. In addition, the guilt experienced by the " rich " peoples of the world in the face of Third World poverty, and also the naïve idea that somehow things could not " go on like this forever," may well have made the public more receptive to the views expressed in the Club of Rome report. Moreover, the first oil crisis also greatly increased the impact of the study, since such an occurrence right after the publication of *The Limits to Growth* was seen by many as empirical evidence that the overall forecast made by the Club of Rome had to be correct.

Furthermore, the Club of Rome study seemed to reflect the spirit of the

* An earlier German version of this article appeared in the *Europäische Rundschau*, Vienna 1982/4. I would like to thank Ruth Stanley and Mary Hess of the East Europe Institute for the English translation.

[1] Dennis L. Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth. A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*, New York, 1972.

times: after an historically long period of rapid economic growth, some in the developed industrial countries were beginning to find prosperity boring, as evidenced by the student revolts that began in the mid-1960s and spread from Berkeley to Paris and Berlin.

No reasonable assessment is possible concerning the degree to which these " limits to growth " were responsible for the intellectual changes that took place in the Western world during the 1970s. No one can predict where these developments will lead: at the present time it is not possible to say whether this will bring a change in value structure so radical that it may represent a fundamental challenge to the achievement orientation of capitalist industrial society. However, the (somewhat naïve) belief that technical and economic development only have positive effects has now certainly been destroyed in large segments of the population. In the economic sphere, the unfavourable economic situation which developed in the Western industrial nations twice during the 1970s (from 1974–75 and after 1979) with high unemployment, inflation and government indebtedness, definitely played an important role in destroying this illusory faith in progress; all over the world, the " limits to (economic) growth " had become obvious, and the relative powerlessness of government economic policy to combat these developments also became manifest, shattering faith in progress. Today in the Western world a pessimistic view of the future is no longer limited to intellectuals and philosophers, but is widespread. However, to be fair in our assessment we could also conclude that this basic attitude of pessimism is merely something fashionable, represents a temporary extreme in public opinion, and thus cannot only be explained by " hard times."

Economic Growth in Socialism[2]

In all types of socialist systems, belief in progress is essential, for socialism is seen as necessarily leading to a social order superior to capitalism on the basis of technical and economic development (" development of the productive forces ").[3] In the Soviet Union, and in the other nations of Central and Eastern Europe which it put on the path of socialism after the Second World War, an optimistic view about the further development of socialism is still obligatory today. This optimistic view was expressed most clearly and with the greatest official authority in the 1961 Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which predicted extremely rapid scientific-technical and economic development that was to assure an " abundance of material and cultural goods " by 1980. At the same

[2] In the following we will be concerned only with those social systems currently existing in the countries which call themselves " socialist." We have termed these social systems " socialist " without thereby attempting to identify or interpret other (i.e. Western) concepts of socialism. At the same time, we also use the designation " CMEA " (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, often referred to as Comecon in the West) and contrast " East " with " West."

[3] The classical formulation of this can be found in the frequently quoted preface to " Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie " (Critique of Political Economy) in Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Ausgewählte Schriften in zwei Bänden* (Selected Writings in Two Volumes), Vol. 1 (Berlin [East], 1960), p. 338.

time that scepticism was gradually spreading in the West with regard to future possibilities for material development, in the Soviet Union the possibilities for future growth were being described in euphoric terms:

> The progress of science and technology under the conditions of the socialist economic system makes it possible to utilize natural resources and energy most effectively in the interest of the people, to discover new forms of energy and to create new materials, to develop methods for influencing climatic conditions, and to open up the universe. The application of scientific findings will play a decisive role in achieving huge increases in the productive forces of society.[4]

Citing this exaggerated faith in the future, which had probably already been characterized by considerations of political expediency 20 years ago, may seem unfair, especially since the most recent (the 26th) congress of the CPSU in 1981 decided to reformulate precisely this Party programme.[5] However, Brezhnev's report at this most recent Party congress revealed that today the official Soviet view of future development is still basically positive. He did say: " The new life will not be created without difficulties. The path of socialist progress is difficult, sometimes even full of anguish . . ." But then he continued: " There will be great, complicated tasks to accomplish, but we will accomplish them; we will definitely accomplish them. Yes, the Soviet people look to the future with confidence "—and in the three sentences that follow there are three references to optimism. Thus Brezhnev ended his report.[6]

Faith in the future possibilities of scientific-technical development and of the economic growth which rests on it is thus officially proclaimed for Soviet socialism. It is not limits to growth which are being discussed under Andropov and Chernenko, but rather—temporary?—difficulties.

IN view of the actual economic developments in the socialist countries, the optimism shown by East European officials up to the present day is quite remarkable. This becomes especially clear if we look at the specific 1980 production goals which were formulated in 1961 for important goods (cf. Table 1).

It is obvious that the amount by which real gains lag behind the plan varies for individual items, but on the whole there is an impressive gap between plan targets and actual production. To be fair, we must say that such a long-term " perspective plan " by no means represents a suitable basis for argumentation—20 years are simply too long a period of time for making predictions of this sort. The only thing that really deserves criticism is the foolishness of making a " plan " of this type in the first place. On the other hand, it seems that this fetishistic belief in limitless economic growth under socialism should to some extent be shaken in the face of such huge discrepancies between expectations and reality.

[4] *Pravda*, 11 Feb. 1961.
[5] *Pravda*, 24 Feb. 1981.
[6] Ibid., based on the German translation in *Presse der Sowjetunion*, No. 5 (Berlin [East], 1981), p. 36.

TABLE 1[7]

Results of the 1961–80 Perspective Plan

	1960	*1970*		*1980*	
	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Electric power (1,000 mill.kwh)	292·3	900–1,000	740·9	2,700–3,000	1,295
Steel (mill.t)	65	145	115·9	250	148
Petroleum (mill.t)	148	390	453·0	690–710	603
Natural gas (bill.m³)	47	310–325	197·9	680–720	435
Coal (mill.t)	513	586–700	624·1	1,180–1,200	716
Chemical fertilizer (mill.t)	13·9	77	55·4	125–135	104
Synthetic resins and plastics (1,000 t)	332	5,300	1,670	19,000–21,000	3,640
Artificial and synthetic fibres (1,000 t)	211	1,350	623	3,100–3,300	1,176
Cement (mill.t)	45·5	122	95·2	233–235	124
Textiles—all types (mill.m²)	6·6	13·6	8·9	20–22	10·7
Leather shoes (mill.prs.)	419	825	679	900–1,000	744·3

However, we get the same result if we take a much more concrete approach to longer-term economic development. The last three five-year plans and the current one (cf. Table 2) show that, in some important respects, these plans were not fulfilled: while by no means economically irrelevant, these shortfalls might also be explained by the " difficulties " to which Brezhnev refered. However, what is decisive for our purposes is the fact that the growth of important macro-economic indicators has very clearly slowed down during the past 20 years.

An examination of the Soviet Union's economic development between 1975 and 1982 tends to confirm this impression (cf. Table 3). In keeping with the general tendency towards slower economic growth during the past years, national income grew by only 2–4 per cent during recent years, and gross industrial production increased by only 3–4 per cent annually. All these figures come from official Soviet statistics but, considering how clear the general tendency is, we do not feel it is necessary for the purpose of this discussion to adjust these figures to

[7] *Pravda*, 19 Oct. 1961, p. 3; *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR* 1979, Moscow 1980, pp. 168–97; *Pravda*, 24 Jan. 1981 and *Pravda*, 28 Feb. 1981. For purposes of comparison, only physical indicators (excluding agriculture) were used.

TABLE 2[8]

Longer-term Economic Development in the Soviet Union (1966–85)

Increase in % compared to preceding period	*1966–70* Actual	*1971–75* Plan	Actual	*1976–80* Plan	Actual	*1981–85* Plan
National Income	41	38·6	28	24–28	24	18–20
Gross Industrial Production	50	47·0	43	35–39	24	26–28
of which:						
Production of Capital Goods	51	46·3	46	38–42	26	26–28
Production of Consumer Goods	49	48·6	37	30–32	21	27–29
Labour Productivity in Industry	32	38·8	34	30–34	17	23–25
Gross Agricultural Production	21	20–22	13	14–17	9	12–14
Investment	42	39·6	42	24–26	29	12–15
Retail Trade Turnover	48	41·8	36	27–29	24	22–25
Value of Services	114	100·3	60	50–70	43	40–50
Real Income per capita	33	30·8	24	20–22	18	16–18
Earned Income of Workers and Salaried Employees	26	22·4	20	16–18	16	13–16
Income of *Kolkhoz* Farmers	42	30–35	25	24–27	26	20–22
Foreign Trade Turnover	51	33–35	122	—	—	—

conform with Western concepts of national accounting. As early as 1978, Western estimates for the first half of the 1980s foresaw that the growth rate for the Soviet Union's gross national product could drop to between 2 and 2·5 per cent annually.[9]

Thus, both in the long- and the short-term, the slowdown of economic growth in the Soviet Union is impossible to overlook. In the other socialist countries of Eastern Europe, economic development may vary in certain specific areas, but the overall tendency is the same: in some cases it can be seen that the rapid economic growth

[8] Materials from the 24th, 25th and 26th Party Congresses of the CPSU.

[9] Cf. National Foreign Assessment Center (CIA), ed., *Simulations of Soviet Growth Options to 1985* (Washington, 1979), p. 21 and p. 23.

TABLE 3[10]

The Current Economic Development of the Soviet Union (1976–83)

Change in % compared to previous year	*1976*	*1977*	*1978*	*1979*	*1980*	*1981*	*1982*	*1983*
National Income	5·9	4·5	5·1	2·5	3·8	3·2	2·6	3·1
Gross Industrial Production	4·8	5·7	4·8	3·4	3·6	3·4	2·8	4·0
of which:								
Production of Capital Goods	5·5	5·8	5·1	3·4	3·6	3·3	2·8	3·9
Production of Consumer Goods	3·0	5·2	4·1	3·4	3·4	3·6	2·9	4·5
Labour Productivity in Industry	3·3	4·0	3·6	3·0	2·6	2·7	2·1	3·5
Gross Agricultural Production	6·5	4·0	2·7	–3·8	–3·0	–2·0	4·0	5·0
Investment	4·5	3·7	6·0	0·7	2·0	3·0	2·0	5·0
Retail Trade Turnover	4·6	4·5	3·9	4·1	5·3	4·4	0·3	2·7
Real Income per capita	3·7	3·5	3·0	3·0	3·5	3·3	0·1	2·0

during the period of reconstruction which followed the Second World War began to slacken even sooner than in the Soviet Union, and there are also cases where national income has actually decreased in absolute terms—for example, in Czechoslovakia in 1962 and 1981/82, in Hungary in 1980, and in Poland, beginning in 1979 and even more dramatically after 1981 (1981: by −13 per cent; 1982: by −8 per cent). During the past few years in Czechoslovakia, economic growth has been slow and has shown a tendency to drop even further, with almost negative growth rates—in 1980 the economy grew by 2·9 per cent; in 1981 growth declined by 0·4 per cent; in 1982 the decline was between 0·5 per cent and 1 per cent. In Hungary, economic growth has been stagnating for the past few years, with some fluctuations, while Rumania, which enjoyed relatively high rates of economic growth up to 1979, only achieved an increase of 2·5 per cent in 1980, 2·1 per cent in 1981 and 2·6 per cent in 1982. At the present time, the growth of national income is relatively higher only in the GDR (4·2 per cent in 1980, 4·8 per cent in 1981 and 3 per cent in 1982) and in Bulgaria (5 per cent in 1981, and 4 per cent in 1982).[11] In 1983 there seemed to be a slight improvement in this development, but this cannot be regarded as a change in the general trend.

[10] Statistical Yearbooks of the USSR and annual plan fulfilment reports.

[11] All figures cited here come from the plan fulfilment reports of the respective countries. For a more detailed account, see: Benedykt Askanas et al., " Die Wirtschaft der RGW-Länder an der Jahreswende 1982/83 " (The Economics of the CMEA Countries at the Turn of the Year 1982/83), *Monatsberichte* of the " Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung," NO. 4 (Vienna, 1983), pp. 269–90.

The overall picture is clear: economic growth has slowed down in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. The present rates correspond to the long-term trends in developed Western industrial nations although, compared with the current unfavourable situation in the West, " socialist " growth rates have been higher (if we disregard Poland and Hungary), so that there is certainly no basis for complacent Western criticism of economic developments in Eastern Europe. The difference is simply that, in the West, policy-makers and the public have got used to the idea of slower economic growth in the long run (as evidenced by the coining of euphemisms like " zero growth "), while official policy statements in the East still give the impression that economic difficulties are merely temporary. Therefore the decisive question is: have the socialist countries now reached limits to economic growth which will be difficult or impossible to overcome, or is the present slow-down only a temporary phenomenon?

The Causes of Declining Growth in Socialism

In order to answer this question, we must first examine the causes of the present decline in growth. It seems reasonable to start by examining the explanations offered by the socialist countries themselves. Within the limits of this article, I shall mainly be considering Soviet statements, although it would undoubtedly be interesting to examine more closely the differences between the socialist countries, which are confronted by widely varying growth problems.

Official Soviet statements[12] give a number of reasons for the decline in growth which has occurred. The declining growth rate of the work force is named as one of the " objective reasons "; rising production costs are named as another. The growing need to develop less favourably situated raw material deposits in the eastern and northern parts of the country is seen as contributing to a slow-down of the growth rate. Thus the ture on environmental protection, which has become increasingly necessary.[13] Besides these reasons, historic and systemic factors are also seen as contributing to a slowdown of the growth rate. Thus the obsolescence of production plants and inadequate infrastructure (especially transport and communications) are given as reasons for reduced growth. But inadequacies in the planning and management of the national economy, the unfavourable effects of the economic system on the introduction of new production techniques, the very low level of

[11] All figures cited here come from the plan fulfilment reports of the respective countries. For a more detailed account, see: Benedykt Askanas et al., " Die Wirtschaft der RGW-Länder an der Jahreswende 1981/82 " (The Economies of the CMEA Countries at the Turn of the Year 1981/82), *Monatsberichte* of the " Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung," No. 4 (Vienna, 1983), pp. 269–90.

[12] For the most part these statements are based on the materials of the five CPSU Party Congresses which took place between 1961 (22nd Party Congress) and 1981 (26th Party Congress). I have dealt in detail with the economic aspects of each Party congress in the journal *Osteuropa*. For a current overview, cf. Peter Knirsch, " Der schwierige Weg zur wirtschaftlichen Effizienz. Wirtschaftsfragen auf dem XXVI Parteitag " (The Difficult Path to Economic Efficiency. Economic Issues at the 26th Party Congress), in *Osteuropa*, Vol. 26, No. 8/9 (Stuttgart, 1981), pp. 825–38 and A507–A531 (Documents).

[13] Thus, *inter alia*, Brezhnev in his report, Section II.2 in *Pravda*, 24 Feb. 1981.

labour productivity, and low investment efficiency (which has decreased over the course of time) are also seen as very important factors.

In the smaller socialist countries the reasons given for the slow-down of economic growth are practically identical to those in the Soviet explanation; however, in particular historical situations, for example in Czechoslovakia from 1964 to 1969 and in Poland especially from 1979, the significance of inadequacies in the economic system has been given considerably greater emphasis, and these factors were regarded as an essential element in the slow-down of growth.

In the area of " objective causes " of declining growth, scarcity of resources takes a rather different form in the smaller CMEA countries than in the Soviet Union: the labour shortage, coupled with a generally low level of productivity, is, at least in the foreseeable future, a factor which limits growth even more than in the Soviet Union. To the extent that these countries have a raw material basis (coal and ore in Poland, lignite and potash in the GDR, coal in Czechoslovakia, bauxite in Hungary, oil in Rumania), the gradual exhaustion of deposits and increasing production costs are seen as restricting growth, just as they are in the Soviet Union. However, the natural resources of these countries are altogether much more limited than the Soviet Union's; their industries and thus their future growth are heavily dependent on imported raw materials. For the smaller CMEA countries, therefore —unlike for the Soviet Union—foreign relations and the specific conditions affecting them are an important growth factor, and these states thus explain their recent growth problems on the basis of a deterioration in their terms of trade. The scarcity of raw materials or a rise in their prices also affects the smaller CMEA countries via foreign trade, and given the present principle of price-setting within CMEA, which is oriented on world market prices, this applies both to foreign trade relations with the Soviet Union and other CMEA states (which are much more important in terms of quantity), and also to foreign trade relations on the world market, that is, with Western industrialized countries and the Third World.

With regard to the financial burden of environmental protection, the situation of the smaller socialist countries may well be less favourable than that of the Soviet Union. While the enormous size of the Soviet Union's territory allows it—at least to a certain extent—to establish industries causing serious environmental pollution in parts of the country which are sparsely populated, this possibility (which is not necessarily always the most economical procedure) does not exist for the other, smaller CMEA countries in Eastern Europe. Thus, there is a greater necessity for them to take active measures to protect the environment against the effects of industry. On the other hand, the Soviet Union is affected more—especially with regard to agriculture—by problems of irrigation, land erosion, and the loss of large agricultural areas through degeneration into steppe or through salinity.

THE resource and environmental problems briefly sketched above have a fatal similarity to the causes of declining growth which are being discussed also in the West. Whether because the socialist countries' historical backwardness meant that environmental problems did not become apparent until much later, or whether because their economic backwardness meant that effective action in this field appeared impossible, the public discussion of environmental problems began much later in the socialist countries than in the Western industrialized nations. Today, appropriate measures are an integral part of overall economic goals[14]; however, the increasing scarcity of economic resources has so far permitted only comparatively modest efforts towards environmental protection. Thus we would not regard economic growth in these countries as having been significantly limited by such measures up to the present.

The scarcity of natural resources and the increased prices which have to be paid for them appear to have had a greater effect on growth in the last few years. In this connection, it would be as well to ignore the shortage of labour which is so often mentioned; it is after all only a result of the low level of labour productivity in comparison with the Western industrialized nations and thus by no means purely the result of an unfavourable demographic development. With more intensive capital utilization and a higher level of macro-economic efficiency, this factor would no longer hinder growth, and to this extent it is not really an " objective " factor.

More serious is the realization that natural resources are not inexhaustible and that economic growth thus has its limits. Part of the slow-down of growth in the socialist countries may indeed also be due to the increasing costs of natural resources. On this point, a re-thinking of these problems would seem to be equally necessary both East and West, and indeed the process has apparently already begun in both systems: in Eastern Europe, sparing use of raw materials and fuels is seen as being of prime necessity and is the subject of numerous " campaigns "; alternative forms of energy are regarded as crucial for the future energy supply; nuclear power stations are being planned and built in considerable numbers, undisturbed by citizens' action groups or the state's own awareness of ecological problems. The low priority which environmental protection has been accorded (at least until now) in relation to industrial growth becomes very clear. However, the recognition of resource problems and the reaction to these problems has also made it clear that faith is no longer placed in unlimited growth under socialist conditions of production until the communist affluent society has been achieved, a belief which was still a decisive influence on the Party programme in 1961, but is no longer. For socialism too, limits to economic growth have become apparent, even though there are no official statements to this effect.

[14] Cf. Brezhnev and Kosygin at the 25th Party Congress in 1976, reported in *Pravda* on 25 Feb. 1976 (Brezhnev) and 2 Mar. 1976 (Kosygin); more recently, Section IX of the " Main Directions of Economic and Social Development in the USSR . . ." passed by the 26th Party Congress of the CPSU, *Pravda*, 5 Mar. 1981. In Bulgaria, the annual Plan Fulfilment Report has for the last few years included a special section on environmental protection, cf. for example *Rabotničesko delo*, 30 Jan. 1981.

THESE ecological limits to growth undoubtedly represent the final, definitive limit to development possibilities in all systems. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that in the past human inventiveness has managed in many different ways to expand these limits, which above all affect man by limiting the possibilities available to him of satisfying wants.

The form of the economic and social system is a very important element in this process of influencing the economic use of nature; as we stated at the beginning, the Soviet-Marxist conception proceeds from the basic assumption that " socialism " offers greater possibilities for economic development than " capitalism." This theoretical view clearly leads to the claim that, in the present phase of industrial development, the socialist economic system is better able than capitalism to overcome the limits to growth which are becoming apparent: in the propaganda of the socialist countries, undue emphasis is nowadays given to the economic problems of the developed Western industrialized nations, while their own problems are judged by quite different standards and are represented as minor and temporary. Nevertheless, it is difficult to reconcile the theoretical tenet and its sweeping assumption of superiority with the fact that the causes of the slow-down in growth are officially seen as resulting in part from the inefficiency of the economic system existing in the socialist countries—an explanation which is not peripheral, but is rather given great emphasis.[15]

The efficiency of economic systems is a highly controversial topic. The complexity of the subject is such that countless criteria may be used in forming a judgment, and in the last resort, personal value judgments determine the individual's attitude to a particular system. Nevertheless, to make a very cautious judgment, past experience has not been able to provide any ideological or theoretical proof of the alleged superiority of the system which prevails in the Soviet Union and in the other CMEA countries. In its present form, the system has contributed significantly to the slow-down in economic growth now taking place, a fact which is not denied in official statements. With respect to the limits to growth, the Soviet system, because of its comparatively extravagant use of increasingly scarce natural resources and its unsatisfactory approach to environmental problems (at least in practice), has so far by no means put up an impressive performance. The system's performance is low both in terms of innovation and in terms of adaptability; both these weaknesses have been the subject of frequent criticism within the Soviet camp and have had particularly negative effects on growth.

It is not possible to give an answer to the question of whether this system can be changed in such a way as to induce a substantial increase in its economic efficiency. In the light of past reforms (and such attempts have been made for at least the past 25 years), the Soviet economic system appears rather inflexible and rigid towards such changes; however, the possibility of successful reforms at some future date cannot of

[15] As evidence of this cf. the source references in footnote 12.

course be ruled out. Nevertheless, it is clear from the statements by Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko that the economic system in its present form suffers from a significant slow-down of economic growth. If the system cannot be changed, in our judgment it may well be reckoned as one of the definitive limits to rapid economic growth in the future.

Consequences of the Limits to Growth in Socialism

The slow-down of economic growth in Eastern Europe and the prospect of definitive limits to growth have a number of economic, political and ideological consequences. The economic dimension is relatively straightforward: the slow-down in growth has affected the CMEA countries at a relatively early stage of their development in comparison with the industrialized nations of the West; for example, in the Soviet Union the per capita GNP is only around 40–50 per cent of the per capita GNP in the USA,[16] or less. In all the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, labour productivity and the standard of living are clearly below the Western level, and the economic power of the East European countries is also considerably less. A slow-down in economic growth, or an end to growth, would have the specific result that state economic policy would no longer be able to count on significantly greater economic resources for the realization of its goals. Thus it would be equally impossible to increase the funds available for investment (until now an important basis for growth) and to raise the living standard of the population, whose material satisfaction is, as Poland has demonstrated, important for domestic stability and, more specifically, for motivating people to work. Moreover, slower growth also limits the posibilities of increasing military expenditure, to name just one important area, and thus it reduces the Warsaw Pact's foreign policy options. All these effects would be exacerbated if growth were to come to a complete stop or even, as has already happened in some cases, negative growth were to occur.

This already gives an indication of the most important political consequences of the limits to growth in socialism. It is not possible to give a definitive answer to the question of whether such economic problems will lead to a tougher domestic and foreign policy or whether it will temper current political attitudes (" liberalization," *détente*); we can only speculate as to which is the likelier alternative. But the changed situation with regard to economic development can certainly have very far-reaching political consequences, including changes in systemic structures (during East European discussions of this subject, it is the existing economic system in particular which is quickly called into question) and forms of government. This may also be deducted from an empirical study of the political consequences of economic failure in various East

[16] The corresponding Western calculations differ considerably due to the difficulties of adjusting the calculations on the basis of a comparable national income accounting system. Cf. The World Bank, ed., *World Development Report 1981* (Washington, 1981), p. 134f.; National Foreign Assessment Center (CIA), ed., *Handbook of Economic Statistics 1980* (Washington, 1980), p. 10f.

European countries; they were particularly clear in Czechoslovakia in 1976/68 and in Poland in 1970 and 1980.

For the development of Soviet-style socialism, a more significant result of the limits to growth appears to lie not just in the economic and political consequences, but in the effects on the ideology which forms the basis of the system. It is impossible to treat this field adequately within the scope of this article; I can only briefly sketch the possibilities which are becoming evident. As my description of the official viewpoint has shown, there was a great deal of optimism earlier with regard to future economic development, and the current slow-down of growth was dismissed as a temporary difficulty, whereby the fundamental importance of rapid economic growth for the goals of economic policy is still undisputed. Nevertheless, compared with the growth fetish which was still official policy 20 years ago, this represents a considerable change; reality has forced a limited—and, from the ideological point of view, certainly difficult—rejection of the view that unlimited growth is possible in socialism.

However, this official viewpoint by no means encompasses all the development trends in Soviet ideology. There is a far greater plurality of views than Party conference documents or the simplified explanations in official textbooks would have us believe. This is particularly true of the topic under discussion. In official or semi-official scientific works, in journalistic writings and in the works of scholars and writers now living in the West, the " limits to growth " are given extensive treatment. Before the Western discussion of these issues reached its climax, the work of the Richta team[17] had appeared in Czechoslovakia, Soviet scientists had participated in serious and thoughtful discussions of environmental and growth problems at conferences and in scientific journals,[18] and in the GDR these issues had long ago attracted the attention of people whose points of view and the implications these have for their critiqe of the system differed very greatly, such as Wolfgang Harich, Günter Havemann and Rudolf Bahro.[19] The more recent " Novosibirsk Report " (see pp. 88–108) can be added to this list. It is admittedly incomplete and refers only to familiar examples; nevertheless, it does show that in " really existing socialism " too, the " limits to growth " represent a problem which concerns wide circles, although the discussion is probably mostly still on an intellectual plane, as it was in the West until the early 1960s.

[17] Radovan Richta a kolektiv, *Civilizace na rozcesti* (Prague, 1966). A German translation appeared under the title *Technischer Fortschritt und industrielle Gesellschaft* (Technical Progress and Industrial Society), Frankfurt/Main, 1972.

[18] Still very informative for the Western reader is the article " ' Grenzen des Wachstums ' im Kommunismus? " (" Limits to Growth " in Communism?), in *Technologie und Politik. Aktuell-Magazin* 2 (Reinbek bei Hamburg, July 1975), pp. 135–83 (rororo-aktuell No. 1880), (abridged reprint from *Voprosy filosofii* and *Sowjetwissenschaft, Gesellschaftswissenschaftliche Beiträge*).

[19] Cf. for example Wolfgang Harich et al., " Der ' Club of Rome ' wird ernst genommen " (The " Club of Rome " is Taken Seriously), in *Technologie und Politik*, No. 2, 1975, pp. 109–133; Rudolf Bahro, *Die Alternative. Zur Kritik des real existierenden Sozialismus* (The Alternative. A Critique of Actually Existing Socialism), Cologne and Frankfurt/Main, 1977.

It is impossible to predict when, or indeed whether, this intellectual discussion will influence official doctrine. As long as a naively materialistic attitude prevails, which sees the advantage of the socialist system as lying solely in its greater capacity for economic growth, it will be difficult to take this step. Perhaps reality, if it remains unfavourable for long enough, i.e. if there are in fact limits to growth, will provide the impulse to reconsider the problem.

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The Novosibirsk Report: Comment

Philip Hanson

IN August 1983, there was a flurry of excitement in the Western press over a confidential paper on Soviet economic problems that had come into the possession of Dusko Doder, the Moscow correspondent of the *Washington Post*.[1] Subsequently Radio Liberty's *Arkhiv samizdata* made the full Russian text of the paper available, with some useful additional annotations.[2] A good deal of the content of the paper is already known through press reports, but it is now possible to consider the full text and its relationship to what else is known about current economic controversies in the USSR.

There is no question that the report is of interest. Exactly how and why it was placed in the public domain is unknown. There is no internal evidence, however, to throw doubt on the press reports of its origins. It is said to have been a confidential paper (" for official use ") presented in April 1983 at a closed seminar organized by economic departments of the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Academy of Sciences and USSR Gosplan. A number of points in the text render it unlikely to have been published in its entirety in the Soviet Union; it would probably strike the censors as too far-reaching in its analysis. The report that it existed officially in just 70 numbered copies seems plausible enough.

It appears, therefore, that Zaslavskaya's paper reveals some of the economic reform ideas that can currently be discussed among senior specialists in or close to the policy-making élite but that are considered too advanced for public display.

Zaslavskaya argues that the present economic system has changed little in 50 years, is no longer appropriate, and is the main cause of declining Soviet economic performance. She goes on to imply that a shift to market rather than administrative allocation of resources is desirable. She calls for some striking amendments to official doctrine and for an analysis of the social forces that resist change in the system. She emphasizes the social as much as the economic unsuitability of the present system and its damaging effects on people's moral attitudes, initiative, and readiness to work.

[1] The first report by Doder appeared in the *Washington Post*, 3 August 1983. Further information was provided in a number of Western papers, with extracts being printed in the *New York Times*, 5 August 1983, and in *Die Welt*, 18–20 August 1983.

[2] Tatyana Zaslavskaya, *Doklad o neobkhodimosti bolee uglublennogo izucheniya v SSSR sotsial 'nogo mekhanizma razvitiya ekonomiki*, AS 5042, 33 pp., 26 August 1983. The title page and author's name are missing from the leaked copy; evidence for Zaslavskaya's authorship is given by the editors of the *Arkhiv samizdata* version. Zaslavskaya is a professor, a full member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and head of the section dealing with social problems at the Institute of the Economics and Organization of Industrial Production of the Siberian Division of the Academy.

The author's implicit support for a decentralized system (p. 89) is the least striking of these features of the paper. It is true that explicit calls for a market-socialist system are not at present allowed in Soviet publications. On the other hand, the recommendation that enterprises should cease to be given targets from above and should select their own suppliers and customers (the key element in any move towards a Hungarian-type system) is quite commonly put forward.[3] It is apparently the prevailing view of economists in the Central Institute of Economics and Mathematics of the USSR Academy of Sciences (TsEMI), though not in the more orthodox Institute of Economics. Zaslavskaya's report adds to the evidence that such revisionist views also have a strong base at the Institute of the Economics and Organization of Industrial Production in Novosibirsk, which is headed by Academician Abel Aganbegyan.

The opposition to this received idea of the " liberals " is, however, at least equally visible. Recent specific attacks on the notion of market socialism, or on that of a self-regulating economy, are not hard to find.[4] A recent article by P. Ignatovsky in *Kommunist* (No. 12, 1983) even attacks value indicators in general and calls for a return to physical indicators (reliance on measurement of performance in tons, metres, etc.). Moreover, the Central Institute of Economics and Mathematics was specifically criticized by Konstantin Chernenko at the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee in June.[5] It looks in general as though the controversy over economic reform has been hotting up.

Zaslavskaya's paper is not, however, directed towards advocating decentralization. She is concerned with why the system now works to retard growth[6] and with the sociology and political economy of achieving a change.

The account of the slow-down is formulated in Marxian terms: the problem is the " lagging of the system of production relations behind the development of productive forces." In the same vein, Zaslavskaya argues that official doctrine needs to be amended to allow for this fact. She asks for doctrinal modification so that more scope can be allowed for market relations under socialism and the existence of antagonistic social groups can be taken into consideration. These are revisionist requests indeed,

[3] As, for example, by a foreign trade official in a discussion in *Ekonomika i organizatsiya promyshlennogo proizvodstva* (*EKO*), No. 1, 1982, p. 58; by P.G. Bunich in *EKO*, No. 11, 1982, and *Pravda*, 11 March 1982; and by V.A. Volkonsky in his *Problemy sovershenstvovaniya khozyaistvennogo mekhanizma*, Moscow, 1981. The journal *EKO* is edited at the Institute of the Economics and Organization of Industrial Production in Novosibirsk.

[4] See, for example, E. Rudyk, " Antimarksistskye kontseptsii upravleniya sotsialisticheskim khozyaistvom," *Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 7, 1983, pp. 138–49; S. Starostin and G. Emdin, " Kazhdoi strokoi plana," *Pravda*, 22 July 1983. Rudyk is at the Institute of Economics.

[5] *Pravda*, 15 June 1983. TsEMI was criticized together with the Institute of Sociological Research. As usual on such occasions, the criticism was so vaguely worded that it was impossible to make out exactly where TsEMI had gone astray.

[6] That it does retard growth is something the paper merely aserts, as do many Western commentators. The only supporting argument offered is that other retarding influences (slowing labour force growth, rising costs of raw materials, etc.) could account only for slow-downs in particular branches and not for the general slow-down that is actually to be observed. The existence of input-output links between the various branches of the economy is enough to undermine this argument.

and the later reference to " class groups " (*klassovye gruppy*) under socialism is also heterodox.

THE report seems to be attributing the " lagging of the system of production relations " to two developments. One is the growth in complexity of the economy (more inter-branch flows to be planned, larger numbers of different products, etc.). The argument is that the Soviet economy could once be managed from the centre, but this now entails an impossibly large information problem. This is a commonplace view that might quite possibly be wrong. The information overload may well have made consistent and feasible plan formulation as impossible in 1933 as it does in 1983. What has changed may be the political acceptability of micro-economic chaos, rather than its extent.

The other source postulated for the system's growing unsuitability is more interesting. Zaslavskaya argues that a system of instructions from above was all right for an obedient, passive, poorly educated labour force but no longer fits a better-educated and materially more secure labour force whose individual rights and sense of justice (*pravosoznanie*) have been increased (p. 91). In other words (though Zaslavskaya does not put it so baldly), the Stalinist economic system could be made to work during a reign of terror, but not after the terror ended.

Under present circumstances, Zaslavskaya contends, the social consequences of the existing economic system are damaging to economic performance. Excessive reliance on an impractical control from above generates laziness, neglect of quality, a low level of morality, social inertia, and a propensity to " departmentalism":

> The social mechanism of economic development at present operating in the USSR does not ensure satisfactory results. The social type of worker formed by it [the social mechanism] fails to correspond not only to the strategic aims of a developed socialist society, but also to the technological requirements of contemporary production (p. 106).

This is a remarkable statement. It is offered, of course, as a contribution to securing a better, but still socialist economy. For all that, this thoroughgoing attack on the social consequences of existing economic arrangements is not that far removed from Alexander Zinoviev's aphorism that communist society is successful in forging the " new man " because it is good at making bad things, or from his dictum that " Communist society is a society of people who work badly."[7]

The observation that workers' efforts and morale tend to be poor in the USSR today is familiar enough. So is the perception that the economic system itself fosters shoddy work, idleness and dishonesty. What is interesting about Zaslavskaya's presentation of this view—if the reported provenance of the paper is correct—is that it was a presentation at a meeting attended by Central Committee and Gosplan officials. This adds

[7] Cited from *Kommunizm kak Real'nost'*, Lausanne, 1981.

to the evidence that impatience with the present system of planning and management is quite pervasive.[8]

The other interesting element in Zaslavskaya's paper is her discussion of the opposition to economic reform. This is connected with her plea for doctrinal change. Present doctrine, she says, denies the possibility of deep, socially antagonistic conflict within Soviet society (p. 89). This hinders consideration of the real opposition to reform, which arises from social interests that would be damaged by reform (p. 100). A sociological analysis is needed of these sources of resistance to change so that a strategy for overcoming this resistance can be devised (p. 98).

Zaslavskaya locates the opposition primarily in the middle level of economic administration, especially among branch ministry officials. In general, she refers to officials at levels somewhere between the central planners (Gosplan, etc.) and the enterprise. The intermediate organizations have, she claims, grown " like mushrooms in recent decades." Their staff occupy " numerous ' cosy niches ' with ill-defined responsibilities . . . but thoroughly agreeable salaries " (p. 99). By comparison, she argues, both the central authorities and enterprise managers have lost power (p. 98). But opposition to radical change also comes from those members of these last two groups who fear the new responsibilities that they would have to shoulder under a new system (p. 99).

Much of the rest of the paper is taken up with a request for funds to support sociological research into these matters by large research teams working closely with the government (p. 101). This, of course, is the universal academic response to any question; even if you already know the answer, never pass up an opportunity to ask for more money to discover it. It is this more than anything which suggests that the paper is genuine.

The " Novosibirsk Report " provides, in total, a valuable insight into the sort of discourse that can at present be conducted on the fringe, at least, of the Soviet policy-making establishment. It shows that bold and far-reaching appeals for doctrinal revision and institutional change are not banned in such circles.

But the things that the report might consistently have said, but does not, are also of interest. The author does not quite spell out in so many words the view that market relations should prevail among enterprises, though she more or less implies it. She criticizes existing doctrine for, among other things, asserting " the unconditional domination of social production over all kinds of unformalized personal and group labour " (p. 89), but she says nothing about the possible role of private and cooperative enterprise in a reformed economic system. And her discussion of the opposition to reform omits all mention of the military, regional Party officials, and the top Party leadership.

[8] In a report for the *New York Times* on 12 June 1983, Leonard Silk quoted conversations with several Soviet economists and officials in the same vein. They asserted, for example, that " the fundamental thing wrong with this country " is the absence of competition, and suggested that job security would have to be sacrificed to make people work better.

Perhaps these are subjects on which the author of the " Novosibirsk Report " has nothing particular to say. But it is hard to see how a thorough economic reform can be prepared without these topics being aired, preferably in public rather than in confidential documents in 70 numbered copies. Anyone who thinks such open discussion is unnecessary (or, even if necessary, inconceivable) should look at the public debate in Hungary from the 1960s to the present.

The appearance of Zaslavskaya's paper might be construed as a sign of progress towards more open and wide-ranging debate in the Soviet Union. This is not, however, something of which the outside observer can be sure. We do not know why, or by whom, the report was leaked. We do not know how the discussion of the report went or the nature of other reports presented at the same seminar. The most sobering reflection of all is that, for all that is known in the West, reports as radical as Zaslavskaya's may have been the staple diet of high-level, closed seminars for years.

The Novosibirsk Report

1. The substantial lagging of production relations in Soviet society behind the development of its productive forces

Over a number of decades, Soviet society's economic development has been characterized by high rates and great stability. This automatically suggested a notion about the organic nature of its features for the management of a planned socialist economy. However, in the past 12–15 years a tendency towards a noticeable decline in the rate of growth of the national income began to make itself felt in the development of the economy of the USSR. If in the eighth five-year plan the average annual increase was 7.5 per cent and in the ninth it was 5.8 per cent, then in the tenth it fell to 3.8 per cent, and in the first years of the eleventh it was about 2.5 per cent (with the average population growth at 0.8 per cent per annum).[1] This does not provide for either the rate of growth in living standards that is required for the people, or for the intensive technical retooling of production.

Increasing effectiveness and speeding up the rate of development of the economy is of paramount concern for the Party, the people and the scientists. In their analyses of the reasons for the negative tendencies in the economy, separate groups of scientists have placed the emphasis on deterioration in conditions for mining raw minerals, the growing frequency of years of drought, the structural disproportions in the country's national economy (the falling rate of investment, deterioration of transport, insufficient interest on the part of the workers in the results of their labour, the weakness of labour discipline, and so on).

All these factors do indeed play a determined role in the creation of the tendencies under scrutiny, but they bear a particular character while the deterioration of the economic indices takes place in the majority of sectors and regions. Therefore, there is a more general reason at the foundation of this phenomenon. In our opinion, it consists in the lagging of the system of production relations, and hence of the mechanism of state management of the economy which is its reflection, behind the level of development of the productive forces. To put it in more concrete terms, it is expressed in the inability of this system to make provision for the full and sufficiently effective use of the labour potential and intellectual resources of society.

THE basic features of the present system of state management of the economy of the USSR (and thus of the system of production relations to which it gives rise) were formed roughly five decades ago. Since that time, this system has repeatedly been readjusted, renewed and improved, but not once has it undergone a qualitative restructuring which would reflect fundamental changes in the state of the productive forces.

[1] Data from the report on "The National Economy of the USSR in 1981" (Statistika, Moscow), 1983.

The most important features of the system of state management of the Soviet economy, noted in the scientific literature, include: a high level of centralization in economic decisions, the character of production planning being based on direct indicators, the weak development of market relations (the prices of goods in demand and the means of production bear no relation to their social value; the centralization of supplies of materials and technology to enterprises, the absence of a market for production, and so on), the centralized regulation of all forms of material incentives for labour, the prevalence of the branch over the territorial principle of management, lack of departmental liaison in the management of the economy by branch and sub-branch, restrictions on economic rights, and consequently also on enterprises' economic responsibility for the results of their economic activity, restriction on all aspects of informal economic activity by the population in the areas of production, services and exchange. All these features reflect the predominance of administrative over economic methods, of centralization over decentralization.

The scientific basis of the system of economic management described above is the theoretical notion developed by economic science about the laws of social reproduction under socialism. This is partially reflected in the textbooks on political economy and in specific economic disciplines, in dictionaries of philosophy and economics, and it can partially be inferred from the actual practice of management of the national economy. The main elements in it are based on the following notions:

1. that socialist production relations " outflank " the development of the productive forces, thereby ruling out any contradictions between them;
2. that there are no deep, much less antagonistic, contradictions between individual, group and public interests under socialism, just as there are none among the interests of different classes and social groups;[2]
3. that the labour of workers in socialist production has a direct social character;
4. that, as a result of this, there is no need to affirm the social necessity for individual expenditure on the production of goods by means of the market mechanism, i.e. of the inorganic nature of commodity and monetary relations for the socialist economy;
5. of the unconditional domination of social production over all kinds of un-formalized personal and group labour, the practical impossibility of " competition " between the public and private sectors in the socialist economy for labour, the working hours of the workers, the material production resources and market outlets;
6. of the workers in socialist production as the " bearers of labour," the labour resources of society, the object of centralized management " from above." To the extent that the resources are by their very nature passive, to the extent that they do not act but are

[2] A thoroughly convincing critique of these positions is given in A.P. Butenko's article " Protivorechiya razvitiya sotsializma kak obshchestvennogo stroya " (Contradictions in the development of socialism as a social order) in *Voprosi filosofii*, 1982, No. 10, pp. 20–27.

" utilized," do not perform actions, but " function," do not change their place of work but are " distributed " and " redistributed," so similarly one cannot expect people who are just " labour resources " to engage in activities such as, for example, participation in management, creative initiative, striving after their own ideas;

7. of the absolute predominance in people's economic activities of material needs, stimuli and incentives (in contrast to their real complex motivations, particularly the substantial role of social and spiritual motives).

The above notions, and the system of centralized (primarily by administrative means) economic management based on them, correspond for the most part to the level of development of the productive forces of Soviet society in the 1930s. The material and social base of large-scale socialist production at that time was only just beginning to take shape, and the level of real socialization of labour remained comparatively low. The links between the branches, enterprises and regions were as yet easily " overseen " from the centre and could be regulated " from above." An overwhelming number of workers in industry had only recently left their villages and had a weakly developed sense of their rights, and no claims to participation in management. For the majority of them material incentives predominated at work over social and spiritual ones. Being relatively undeveloped, they were a convenient object of management.

The range of choice of various forms of economic behaviour, which corresponded to the workers' interests, was quite limited at this time. Although formally speaking there was no unemployment in the country, in many areas and branches there were hidden structural labour surpluses. Fear of losing his job and difficulties in finding a domicile hampered the worker's mobility, and firmly bound him to the enterprise. Migration of the rural population to the towns was limited by the inexistence of passports, and, for the *kolkhozniki*, by the necessity of obtaining agreement from the *kolkhoz* general assembly. The average level of wages was only a little higher than the minimum needed to maintain a family. Therefore, the main body of workers did not have a choice between work and leisure: the majority strove to work at full capacity in order to improve the material situation of their family. They also had to put something aside " for a rainy day," in as much as there was no state provision for illness and old age. To all this one must add that towards the end of the 1930s virtual wartime measures of worker discipline were introduced at the enterprises and establishments (you were taken to court for being late or missing work, given a prison sentence even for petty theft of public property, and so on). Such was the social system, according to whose parameters people were consistently regarded as " cogs " in the mechanism of the national economy and behaved themselves just as obediently (and passively) as machines and materials.

HOWEVER, decades have passed since then, in the course of which the political and economic situation of Soviet society has radically changed. The present state of its productive forces is different from the 1930s not only quantitatively (in terms of scale), but qualitatively (in terms of new " procedures " and " generations "). The branch, departmental and territorial structure of the national economy has become much more complex, the number of its links has grown colossally and even more its technological, economic and social ties. The structure of the national economy long ago crossed the threshold of complexity when it was still possible to regulate it effectively from one single centre. Regional, branch and economic disproportions in the national economy of the USSR, which emerged and can be observed in the past five-year plans, are growing relentlessly; and, more than anything else, indicate the exhaustion of possibilities for centrally-administered economic management, the necessity for more active use of " automatic " regulators in balancing production, linked to the development of market relations. In this situation, the scientists' tardiness in stating their position on the direct social nature of socialist labour and the " special " nature of socialist commodity and monetary relations has been a poor turn to society.

Important changes have also taken place in the social type of worker in the socialist economy. The level of his education, culture, general information, and awareness of his social position and rights, has grown incomparably. The main body of skilled workers, on whom above all the effectiveness of the production process depends, nowadays has a rather wide political and economic horizon, is able to evaluate critically the leaders' economic and political activities, accurately recognizes its own interests and can defend them if necessary. The spectrum of needs and interests of workers is today more abundant and broader than that of workers in the 1930s; moreover, in addition to economic, it includes social and spiritual needs. It testifies to the substantial increase in the level of the workers' personal development, but at the same time it is an indication that they have become a much more complex object of management than previously.

The change in the predominant social type of worker would, in turn, not have been possible without substantial changes in the socio-economic conditions of the people's sphere of activities. The democratization of political life, the broadening and constitutional bolstering of individual rights, the universal issue of passports and equalizing of civil rights for every group within the population, a sharp improvement in the standard of living, the introduction of social welfare for sickness and old age, and also the beginning of labour shortages in recent years in the majority of sectors and regions in the country—all these assisted a significant broadening of economic freedom in the workers' behaviour and, as a result, the role of subjective factors in economic development increased.

Finally, there has been a qualitative change, in the course of the period in question, in the material and technical base of production and the demands made by it on human labour. The size and value of the means of

production used by this labour and its technical armoury have grown many times. As a result, on the one hand the level of productive labour has greatly increased, but on the other, the scale of damage inflicted upon society through careless labour, violations of labour and technology discipline, irresponsible attitudes to technology etc., have also risen. The widespread application in many sectors of the economy of complete technological systems, the increase in the specific weight of labour given over to the functions of adjustment, control and regulation, and improvement of technological concerns have noticeably increased the demand for qualifications, reliability and responsibility in human labour, for workers' personal involvement in plan fulfilment, and so on. The General Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party described these tendencies thus: " For fruitful and effective labour it is necessary today to have modern skills, the ability to manage complex technology and technological processes, a high level of organization and discipline, individual readiness to take on responsibility and calculated risks, the ability to seek out new ideas, solutions, and new working methods."[3] In fact, man is often the weakest link in the technological chain.

The overall results of all these advances are, on the one hand, an increase in the technological demands made on the labour behaviour of the workers, and on the other, a decrease in the effectiveness of centralized production management, based on the administrative regulation of the activities of the lower-ranking links by the higher. Based on the expectation of a relatively low level of development in the workers, this system appears unable to regulate the behaviour of more developed (in personal terms) and economically free workers, unable to make sufficiently effective use of their labour potential and intellectual resources, unable to ensure a high level of labour, production and plan discipline, high quality work, effective use of technology, or to assure positive modes of conduct in the managers, accountants and supply technicians.

As we see it, all this testifies to the fact that the present system of production relations has substantially fallen behind the level of development of the productive forces. Instead of enabling their accelerated development, it is becoming more and more of a brake on their progressive advancement. One outcome of this is the inability of production relations to provide modes of conduct for workers in the socio-economic sphere that are needed by society. Let us look at this question in greater detail.

2. The production relations of socialism and the socio-economic behaviour of the workers

One of the peculiarities of our time is the significant strengthening of the role of behavioural factors in the functioning and development of the economy. The nature of the socio-economic behaviour of the workers

[3] Todor Zhivkov. Report at the Plenum of the CC of the Bulgarian Communist Party, 29 April 1982. " Osnovnye polozheniya partiynoi kontseptsii novogo Kodeksa o trude " (Basic propositions in the Party conception of the new Codex on labour) in *Rabotnichesko delo*, 3 December 1982.

turns out to have a decisive influence on the conditions, as well as on the effectiveness, of production. Therefore, production today can only be successfully managed if we can learn to regulate the behaviour of the workers.

Socio-economic behaviour is the system of interconnected deeds and actions which are carried out by workers in the social and economic spheres of life; emanating from the workers' own interest, their goal is the satisfaction of their material, social and spiritual needs. Reflecting the subjective aspect of human activity, this behaviour bears an essential influence on its results and effectiveness.

Patterns of the workers' socio-economic behaviour are extraordinarily diverse. It is neither possible nor necessary to describe them in detail. Therefore, we shall restrict ourselves below to a brief enumeration of the most important aspects of this behaviour, indicating which aspects of the economy are influenced by each one.

Demographic behaviour, found in the sphere of human reproduction, manifests itself in different groups of the population, in the customary marriage patterns for men and women, the average duration of the marriage, the terms, frequency and reasons for annulment of marriage, the number of children and the birth-rate. It would follow that within this sphere is also included the behaviour associated with the length of time that the worker is able to work, his health, his longevity. The latter shows itself in the extent to which regimes of work and rest are observed, in the methods employed for preventing illness, for cures and self-administered remedies, the proliferation, on the one hand, of lessons in physical education and sport, and on the other, of bad habits (drunkenness, alcoholism, drug abuse). The peculiarities of demographic behaviour bear on the general size, dynamics, age and sex composition, health and territorial distribution of the working population, of children, young people, the elderly, and the disabled.

The behaviour of the population **in the sphere of education**, which manifests itself in the choice of profession, of types of general and specialized learning, of participation in various ways of raising one's qualifications, self-education and so on, is a factor in the formation of the professional and qualification structure of cadres.

Migration and mobility behaviour manifests itself in the transfer of workers, stimulated by group and individual interests, between, on the one hand, different areas of employment, branches, enterprises, professions, and on the other, between regions, town and country, and between different towns and villages. The results are changes in the territorial and branch distribution of the work force and the provision of labour-supply to different parts of production.

The **professional-labour** behaviour of the workers at their place of work is characterized by their relations to work, the level of discipline, the quality of work, the extent to which norms are fulfilled, by responsibility, reliability, manifestations of economic initiative, and so on. Its chief results lie in the effectiveness of production and the quality of output.

Individual economic behaviour consists of the subjective aspects of the population's activities in the private sector of production: work in the private, subsidiary economy or in the collective allotments of individual apartment and employment buildings, in the pursuit of various crafts, hunting, fishing, etc. The modes of this type of behaviour on the one hand determine the scale of labour costs in the private sector of production and, on the other, the volume of additional output thus created.

There are also diverse modes of behaviour by people **in the spheres of distribution exchange and consumption**. Their influence tells in the first place on the distribution of the national revenue: the relation between consumption and investment, the level and structure of income of different social groups, and so on.

MOTIVATED by individual and group interests, the socio-economic behaviour of the workers has a substantial influence on practically all aspects of the economy and is therefore one of the sources of spontaneity in its development. The role of the spontaneous, that is not regulated, behaviour of the workers in the development of the socialist economy has many ramifications. Several aspects of it often infringe upon its planned character, cause disproportions and lower the rate of production development. But other aspects testify to the release of the workers' creative forces, to the raising of their labour activity and to making active use of social reserves in production effectiveness. The management of the workers' economic behaviour is thus a complicated affair.

Within the framework of this problem, one can distinguish two tasks, each demanding a different approach. The first lies in determining, from the point of view of public interests, the optimum sphere of individual behaviour for workers in each field of their socio-economic activities which are not regulated " from above." The second task is indirectly to provide modes of socio-economic behaviour for workers, in the sphere of choice left to them, which are in line with public interests.

The determination of the first task is connected with the fact that the boundary between the activity *per se* and its subjective aspect—behaviour—is not fixed. It depends on how strictly the given activity is regulated. As an example, where labour discipline is weak, the workers have the possibility of working only part of the time allocated, of being absent from work, of permitting stoppages, of drinking alcohol at their place of work, and so on. The least disciplined section of workers takes advantage of this opportunity, while the main nucleus of skilled workers works honestly. Under these conditions, the use made of work hours is an important indication of workers' behaviour at work.

The introduction of order, the raising of the demand for labour discipline, the strengthening of control over the use of work hours, change the situation: the regular attendance of the workers at their place of work becomes the norm and by the same token ceases to reflect the peculiarities of their individual behaviour. Today, their individual

relationship to work manifests itself in the varying degrees of care and attention which they give to it and, consequently, in the uneven quality of the produced goods. Stricter regulation of the quality of output leads to a further narrowing in the scope of the workers' labour behaviour, which is restricted, for example, by differences in the expenditure of raw materials, energy, goods, in different degrees of participation in management and rationalization activities, etc.

On the whole, the more strictly regulated the working and economic activity is from without, the narrower the sphere of individual behaviour of those who execute it, and, so it seems, the less the influence of personal behavioural factors on the development of production. But what is the actual dependency between the rigour of administrative regulation of activity and the effectiveness of the development of the economy? Is it, indeed, that the more strictly controlled the aspects of the workers' activity, the more successful its results? For a whole number of reasons, this question has to be answered in the negative.

First, the administrative regulation of labour and of other economic activities has a centralized character and, in the majority of cases, is carried out without taking into account the conditions of specific regions, sectors and enterprises. And since these conditions vary, the practical fulfilment of regulating rules and norms runs across great difficulties in the provinces and does not always lead to favourable results.

Second, the increasing severity in regulating activity strengthens the need to observe established rules in administrative control; this is fraught with the increase of non-productive labour and the deterioration of the economic indices of the enterprises. Therefore, in practice, there is often no control on a daily basis over the observation of these rules, and they are flouted. As a result, not only is the actual leeway for workers' free behaviour not curtailed, but sometimes it increases noticeably. There often arises a paradoxical situation whereby the opportunity for a positive show of initiative by the workers is reduced by multiple administrative restrictions to naught, while the spectrum of anti-social modes of behaviour remains rather broad.

Third, although the strengthening of the administrative regulation of activities helps the elimination of certain negative modes of behaviour, it almost inevitably also leads to the undermining of creative elements of labour, a restriction on economic and technical initiatives by the workers, the deflection of their personal interests to the realm of the family, leisure pursuits, their own household, and so on. Anyway, to transfer the economy from a path of extensive development to one of intensive development can only be done in conditions where all available social reserves and all creative potential of the workers are realized.

Thus, it is in the interests of socialist society, while regulating the key aspects of the socio-economic activity of the workers, to leave them a sufficiently wide margin of freedom of individual behaviour. Hence the necessity for directing behaviour itself, i.e. the subjective relationship of the workers to their socio-economic activity. Administrative methods of

management are powerless here.[4] The management of behaviour can only be accomplished in an oblique fashion, with the help of incentives which would take into account the economic and social demands of the workers and would channel their interests in a direction which would be of benefit to our society. Moreover, to be able to control behaviour, it is not enough to provide the correct direction for each class or social group's interests. It is necessary to aim, on the one hand, at the coordination of public, collective and individual interests of workers " along vertical lines," and on the other, at the integration of the interests of classes and groups, which interact as it were on the " horizontal " plane.

The realization of these tasks presupposes a serious reorganization of the system of state management of the economy and especially the rejection of administrative methods of management with a high degree of centralization of economic decision-making, and the subsequent complex transition to economic methods of regulating production.

3. A Strategy for Perfecting Production Relations

The urgent need for reorganizing the system of state management of the economy was realized in theory by the Party a long time ago, and this was reflected in numerous resolutions made by the Party over the past decade; in particular in the resolutions of the 24th, 25th and 26th CPSU congresses, and in those of the November 1979, October 1980 and May 1982 Plenums of the CC of the CPSU. In a speech at the November (1982) Plenum of the CC of the CPSU Comrade Yu. V. Andropov again stressed that " it is necessary to create conditions—economic and organizational—such that would stimulate top quality productive labour, initiative and enterprise. And, conversely, bad work, inactivity, and irresponsibility must, in the most direct and irredeemable fashion, affect the material rewards, the work situation and the moral authority of the workers."[5]

However, while the problem is not solved, and the present system of management of the economy stubbornly retains its existing features, Party documents note the necessity of decisively overcoming this. Resolutions made about this matter are slowly being realized in a compromise fashion, as though coming up against hidden opposition. In the face of this, periods of more or less successful progress in the intended direction are from time to time replaced with " ebbs "—a return to administrative methods of management which ignore the demands of economic laws.

The reasons behind this state of affairs, as they appear to us, may be separated into the ideological, the social and the scientific. The ideological brake on the active adjustment of the principles of management of economic life is the predominance of an over-simplified notion about the

[4] A great number of interesting and quite concrete ideas about methods of regulating the labour behaviour of the workers with the help of economic controls were expressed in comrade T. Zhivkov's report at the November (1982) Plenum of the CC of the Bulgarian Communist Party (see the newspaper *Rabotnichesko delo* of 3 December 1982).

[5] *Pravda*, 23 November 1982.

mechanism for perfecting production relations under socialism. Thus, in the encyclopaedia *Political Economy*, it is noted that " the production relations in every society form a more stable [in comparison with the productive forces—*TZ*] integral system which develops according to its own individual laws; at a certain point these lag behind the productive forces and become a brake on the further progress of the workers and of the means or the technological forms of production."[6] Further on it says that in antagonistic societies the conflict between the level of development of the productive forces and the condition of production relations manifests itself in a sharpening of the class struggle. " Either there will be the beginning of a period of acute socio-economic and political shake-ups from the inside, of modification and accommodation of production relations to the new conditions of production, or there will be an era of general crisis in the present social formation and its destruction as a result of social revolution."[7]

In contradistinction, socialist society systematically " regulates the development of production relations, secures the correspondence between them and the continuously growing productive forces, thereby accelerating economic and social progress."[8] The perfection of production relations is here realized through direct change in specific economic forms, by harmonizing economic interests through various incentives, and also through change in the organizational structure of management and in economic legislation.

ACCORDING to the theories developed in political economy textbooks, the perfection of production relations within a capitalist framework constitutes a social process which reflects the conflict between social classes and groups; in socialist society, however, it is essentially deprived of social content, it ceases to reflect the struggle of interests of any social group whatever, i.e. it acquires an almost " technical " character. This viewpoint is expressed particularly well in the latest edition of the *Dictionary of Philosophy*, where in the corresponding entry it openly affirms that under socialism there is no group interested in the preservation of outmoded production relations and therefore their perfection takes place without social conflict.[9]

In analyzing the past decades of our economic development, we must express doubt about this point of view. Such an analysis shows that the process of perfecting production relations under socialism runs a more complicated course than is commonly suggested, to the extent that the reorganization of the existing system of production relations is given over

[6] Yu. A. Vasil'chik, " Sootvetstviya proizvodstvennykh otnosheniy kharakteru i urovnyu razvitiya proizvoditel 'nykh sil zakon " (Law of correspondences of production relations to the character and level of development of productive forces) in the encyclopaedia *Political Economy* (Moscow, 1979), vol. 3, p. 589.

[7] Ibid., p. 589.

[8] L.I. Abalkin, " Proizvodstvennye otnosheniya " (Production relations), ibid., pp. 273–274.

[9] L.I. Abalkin, " Zakon sootvetstviya proizvodstvennykh otnosheniy kharakteru i urovnyu razvitiya proizvoditel 'nykh sil " in *Filosofskii slovar'* (Moscow, 1980), p. 116.

to social groups that occupy a somewhat elevated position within this system and accordingly are bound to it through personal interest.

As is well known, the kernel of the system of production relations is constituted by the prevailing form of ownership of the means of production, which takes concrete shape in management relations, direction and usage. The system of these relations makes up the peculiarities and distinctions in the situation of different social groups, in their interests and behaviour. The concrete system of management of the national economy, reflecting this or that modification in production relations, brings about a corresponding distribution of influence among social groups, central and regional economic departments, organs of regional and territorial management, ministries and associations, associations and enterprises, etc. Therefore, a radical reorganization of economic management essentially affects the interests of many social groups, to some of which it promises improvements, but to others a deterioration in their position.

By virtue of this, attempts at improving production relations, bringing them into greater correspondence with the new demands of productive forces, attempts undertaken by the higher organs of power, cannot run their course without conflict. The successful resolution of this task is only possible on the basis of a well thought out socialist strategy being brought into play, a strategy that would simultaneously stimulate the activity of groups interested in changing present relations and block the actions of groups capable of obstructing this change. The attempts to reorganize the management of the national economy, undertaken during the last five-year plan, did not take into consideration the social aspects of the process of improving production relations under socialism, and this was one reason, so it seems to us, for their lack of success.

THE second group of reasons, which caused an inadmissable postponement of the transition to economic methods of management, we have called social. In this connection, we will pose the question: " Which social group's interests are affected by a transition from principally administrative to primarily economic methods of management?"

In the opinion of many Soviet economists, one of the peculiarities of the present system of state management of the economy of the USSR is the relative slackening off of the functions of, on the one hand, the highest link, i.e. of the organs representing general state interests (Gosplan of the USSR and others), and on the other, of the lowest link, i.e. of the immediate producers of output—the associations and enterprises. In contradistinction to this, the functions of the intermediate link of management—the ministries and departments (with their territorial organs)—patently suffer from hypertrophy. Hence the well-known slackness in the processes of economic management, the violations of the proportional development of the economy, the paralyzing constraints on the economic initiatives of the labour collectives and informal groupings in the population.

Any serious reorganization of economic management must be accompanied by a certain redistribution of rights and responsibilities among various groups of workers. Thereby, the expansion of every group's rights is, as a rule, combined with an increase of responsibilities; and a decrease of responsibilities goes hand in hand with a reduction of rights. Because of this, the attitude of the majority of groups to possible transformations in production relations, and to the economic mechanism which is their reflection, is not unambiguous.

Thus, a good number of workers in the central organs of management, whose prospective role ought to be increased, is afraid that its responsibilities will become substantially more complicated, as economic methods of management demand much more of highly qualified cadres than do administrative methods. The guarded response of this group of workers to the idea of a transition to and a consistent implementation of economic methods of management often manifests itself in unfounded assertions, as though such transition was going to undermine the centralized motive power in the development of the socialist economy, or to reduce the real importance of the plan.

The reorganization of production relations promises a substantial narrowing and simplification in responsibilities for workers in departmental ministries and their organs. However, it is pregnant with just as significant a reduction in their rights, in their economic influence and also in the number of their apparatuses: the liquidation of many departments, administrations, trusts, branches etc. that have grown like mushrooms in recent decades. Naturally, such a prospect does not suit the workers, who at present occupy numerous " cosy niches " with ill-defined responsibilities, but thoroughly agreeable salaries.

Logically speaking, the group which must be most interested in the transition to economic methods of management is the managerial " staff " of the enterprises (associations), whose rights it has been proposed to widen sharply, and in the second place, the ordinary workers and ITR (Engineering and Technical Workers), who could use their individual capabilities more fully, work more effectively and receive a higher salary. However, in practice both these groups are not homogeneous in their subjective attitude to the projected reorganization of the economic mechanism. The more qualified, energetic and active representatives of these groups reckon that they are not working at full strength now. They want to realize themselves more fully in their work, to have better living conditions, and thus they support ideas about the intensification of the economy. In contrast to this, the more apathetic, the more elderly and the less qualified groups of workers are worried that they will have to " pay for it " if their rights are broadened and their salaries increased, with a sharp growth in their obligations, increasing labour intensity, and more economic responsibility for the results. And this is not at all to many people's taste, the more so since the system of production relations which has been in operation over the course of many decades has formed a predominantly passive type of worker, who bears

witness to the famous principles of " I need no more than anybody else " and " that's no concern of mine."

From what has been said it is evident that the social necessity of improving production relations, and likewise the system of economic management thereby reflected, will not find a clear and precise echo in the interests of many social groups. Therein resides the social reason for the high stability of the rigidly centralized, predominantly administrative, system of management of the economy, whose ineffectiveness was long ago recognized by the Party and reflected in its resolutions.

THE third group of reasons for the phenomenon described is linked with an insufficient level of development in the social sciences, the absence thereof of a fully elaborated " model " for the new economic mechanism. The fact is that production relations are an integral system, all the elements of which are interconnected. This shows itself in their ability to " reject " those more effective, but qualitatively different elements of economic relations which were experimentally grafted on to them. Essentially, what we have observed over the course of past decades was a number of attempts to inculcate in the present system individual progressive methods of management, and their subsequent rejection because they did not correspond to its spirit. Analysis of the experience accumulated in a given field leads one to the conclusion that it is impossible to improve the mechanism of economic management, arrived at many years ago, by gradually replacing the more outmoded of its elements with more effective ones. Evidently, one should recognize that the discreet replacement of concrete systems of production relations in the process of the development of the communist order means that such a change will come about rather infrequently, but for that it is a complex and deep matter.

It is natural that socialist society can decide on such a serious transformation of production relations only under the influence of objective necessity, with a clearly established aim and reliable means of achieving it. We have already spoken about the first aspect of this question: there is a need for a transformation of production relations and the system of economic management, and its aims are sufficiently clear. The economic aim of the transformation lies in raising the effectiveness and rate of development of the national economy, and the social aim is in the elimination of obstacles to the social, professional and individual development of the workers, in the formation of a genuinely socialist attitude to labour among the workers. However, the means for achieving these aims are as yet clear only in general outline, rather as directions for principles than as decisive forms of transformation to new production relations.

TODAY, our social sciences are not proposing an integral, internally coordinated and concretely thought out, detailed " model " of a

system of economic management, which it would only remain to take and carry over from scientific theory into practice. It is true that a rather serious undertaking towards the building of such a system has been embraced by Soviet lawyers, economists and sociologists. A special place is occupied in this regard by a leading research paper, from our point of view, by B.P. Kurashvili, a small fragment of which recently appeared in print,[10] and by research papers by R.O. Khalfina, M.I. Kozyr, N.P. Fedorenko, V.A. Tikhonov, I.I. Lukinov, and many other important scientists. But nonetheless our science still has no finished " model " for the new economic mechanism, and with present methods of organizing research, in principle it cannot have one.

Of course, we must remember how technical arrangements of great complexity are being projected. Special scientific collectives are established for these aims: they work on a single plan under the direction of the main designers; this provides the structural unity of the project and the coordination and linking up of all its elements. Besides, such work is carried out in the closest contact with the state organs of management, which provide the materials and financial conditions for success.

The level of complexity in the economic mechanism of economic management is many degrees higher than that of all existing technical mechanisms; yet investigations into the elaboration of a new " model " for this mechanism are made using amateurish methods. A great number of groups is at work here, groups that although formally focused on a single problem, are in fact disparate, often duplicating one another's work and, as a result of their small number, incapable of going further than the general formulation of principles, upon which the new economic mechanism must be based. The practical realization, then, of these principles, i.e. the building of a concrete mechanism of national economic management based on economic incentives, remains a matter for the future. The social aspects of reforming economic management are as yet especially weakly worked out: concrete means for coordinating public, group and personal worker interests, methods for the provision of positive forms of economic behaviour, means of activating workers' participation in the management of production and society. Hence, there are new and great tasks confronting sociology, and in particular that branch of it which we are trying to develop under the name of " economic sociology." The central object of this scientific discipline is the social mechanism of economic development. I would now like to move on to a description of this.

4. The Social Mechanism of Socialist Economic Development

The " model " for production relations worked out by Soviet science, and which corresponds to the present level of development of the productive

[10] B.P. Kurashvili, " Gosudarstvennoe upravlenie narodnym khozyaistvom: perspektivy razvitiya " (State management of the national economy: perspectives for development) in *Sovietskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 6, 1982, pp. 38–48.

forces, must take into consideration the complications, the "multi-dimensionality," and frequently even the conflict of interests, of the groups operating in the economic structure, the regular pattern of their behaviour and interdependence, the substance of their " dialogue " with the social institutions and organs of economic management. Similarly, the elaboration of a strategy for the reorganization of production relations presupposes a knowledge of the social situation, the demands, interests, and real and potential behaviour of those social groups which can substantially influence the course of the transformation.

Besides, all these questions have been extraordinarily sketchily studied. We have not even uncovered the tip of the " iceberg " of socio-economic relations, and especially of the specific features of the social situation of different branch, official, professional and territorial groups of workers (the level and sources of their income, their living conditions, the level of public services, the structure of material demand and so on). Still less is known about the substance and peculiarities of the groups' socio-economic consciousness: the nature of their value orientation, the level of development and structure of their needs, the substance and modes of expression of their interests. The most important category from the point of view of tasks at hand is that of their socio-economic interests, which has been much more feebly worked out in Soviet science than, for example, in Hungarian.

Extremely inadequate, from our point of view, is the connection between the research carried out in economics and that in sociology: the number of serious pieces of research at the " junction " of these sciences is small. If the substance of production relations in socialism has for a long time been studied by the economists, and the peculiarities of the social structure of socialist society by the philosophers and sociologists, then the concrete social mechanism of interaction between the economic base and the social superstructure has as yet not been uncovered by anyone. In concrete terms this shows itself in the fact that the processes, the regular patterns and tendencies of economic development in the country are as a rule studied " without subjectivity," disregarding connections with the situation, interests and behaviour of the appropriate social groups. On the other hand, the social structure of society is investigated in isolation from the actual economic relations, with the exception of the division into two forms of socialist property and of socially heterogeneous types of labour. As a result, neither the economic mechanism of the formation of the social structure, nor the social mechanism of the development of the economic structure, without knowledge of which the systematic perfection of society's production relations is unlikely to be made possible, are revealed.

The collective of the department of social problems IEiOPP SO AN SSSR* strives to present the process of the development of the socialist economy as the result of the cooperation of social groups which, although

* Institute of the Economics and Organization of Industral Production of the Siberian Division of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

connected by their relations of comradely cooperation, at the same time have different interests which are conditioned by their situation. In other words our aim is to study the social mechanism of economic development.

When we speak of such a mechanism, we have in mind a stable system of cooperation among socio-economic groups for the production of human life, the use of the natural environment, the creation and consumption of material wealth and services; a system on the one hand regulated by historically formed social institutions and, on the other, by the current activities of the state organs of economic management. The socio-economic behaviour of the groups, conditioned by their situation and their interests, is reflected in the specific form of functioning of the system. Providing the connection between the economic and social spheres of society, the social mechanism of economic development assures a systematic raising of production relations to the level of productive forces. The moving force of this mechanism is the contradiction between the level of development of productive forces and the state of production relations, which finds concrete expression in the interests of the socio-economic groups.

THE central organs of state management of economic and social development represent the interests of society as a whole. In order to fulfil their functions, they work out a concrete strategy for developing the economy and the social structure, they shape and improve the economic mechanism and directly administer the development of production.

The activities of the state organs of management form the economic and legal conditions for the behaviour of the socio-economic groups. In conjunction with this, these groups enjoy full rights as participants in the " dialogue " with the organs of economic management. Even under the strictest regimentation of behaviour in the economic sphere of the population's activity, as has already been noted, there remains a definite choice of responses to the restrictions imposed by the state, responses which are often far from understood and not always realized. Hence the possibility of open and concealed conflict between group and public interests. In these cases, when the norms and rules that have been imposed (for example, restrictions on the size of private output, on fishing methods, or on the holding of more than one office, etc.) vitally affect important interests of certain groups in the population, the latter frequently search for an opportunity somehow or another of evading the prohibition and satisfying their needs. The state then takes stronger measures to suppress undesirable forms of activity, in response to which the population looks for more refined patterns of behaviour which would secure the satisfaction of their interests in the new conditions, etc. In such a way, mutually oriented behaviour and reciprocal influence, on the one hand by the state represented by its relevant organs of management, and on the other by the socio-economic groups, is an important part of the social mechanism of economic development.

At the same time, the substance of this mechanism is not just reducible

to the same thing as the " dialogue " of the population with the state, since an equally important part of it consists of the groups' interaction with one another. In those cases when the interests of separate groups coincide, they usually unite for the joint achievement of their goal. If group interests are disparate, which very often happens, the possibility of conflict then arises. Some are resolved spontaneously by way of seeking out compromise forms of behaviour, satisfying both sides. When a successful compromise is not reached, and the clash of group interests takes on a sharp form and receives wide publicity, the resolution of conflict is achieved with the help of appropriate arbitrators, provided, as a rule, by organs of the Party and the state, who set up certain norms of socio-economic behaviour for the two sides.

As our investigations show, the social mechanism of economic development is quite complicated. Just as the mechanism of a watch consists of a large number of interlinked springs, cogs, hammers etc., so the social mechanism of economic development consists of a multitude of individual mechanisms for socio-economic reproduction, which although linked to one another are relatively independent. At the base of each of these mechanisms lies the specific, closed system of links regulating each separate side of socio-economic reproduction. The elements of these mechanisms are the links between pairs of socio-economic phenomena (for example, between the position and the interests of groups, between their interests and their behaviour, between their behaviour and the effectiveness of their activity, etc.).

For instance, an analysis of the social mechanism of the development of the agrarian sector in society permits one to single out such individual mechanisms of reproduction in its composition as the socio-demographic, distributive-labour, socio-infrastructural, service-employer, private-economic, socio-managerial, and many others. Without going into a detailed description of all these mechanisms, let us stress just three factors: their great number, their concrete functional character, and their close links with one another. The latter is determined by the fact that each link between the pairs of socio-economic phenomena as a rule forms part of several individual mechanisms of reproduction. Hence the " coupling " of these mechanisms with one another, their ability either to hand over from one to the other the pulse of development, or to " compete " for resources of one type or another and restrict one another's development.

THE results of the functioning of the social mechanism of economic development can have an economic and a social aspect. In the economic sphere it determines specific rates of increase of the national income, the quality of the exploitation of the natural environment, the effectiveness of scientific-technical progress. The social results of the working of a given mechanism can be seen in the formation of a specific type of person performing economic activity: the worker (executor or manager), the recipient of profits, the buyer, the consumer.

As Karl Marx observed, the human individual is an " imprint " of all

the social relations in which he is involved and has been involved. Therefore, every system of production relations forms a particular social type of economic activity, which corresponds to its essence, and first and foremost a specific type of worker. The features of this type of person are determined not by such exogenous, in relation to production relations, indicators as the age and sex composition, the professional and occupational structure, physical strength, health and so on, but by firmly adopted norms of behaviour in the spheres of production, distribution, exchange and consumption. For an evaluation of the social type of worker formed by a concrete system of production relations the presence in the basic mass of them of such qualities as conscientiousness, diligence, industriousness, responsibility, reliability, discipline, the ability to take independent decisions, including calculated risks, honesty, respectability, high principles, caution and so on, is important.

One can only judge the social qualities of the workers on the basis of their behaviour, which creates an impression of identity between the concepts of the " type of worker " and the " type of behaviour." But the meaning of these concepts is different. The character of behaviour is contingent upon opportunities and depends not only on the type of worker, but also on the other circumstances in which he finds himself at a given moment. Therefore the forms of economic behaviour are more flexible and undergo far greater alterations in the face of changes in external conditions.

In contrast to this, the worker's belonging, in his individual relationship, to a certain social type is a factor of lasting effect, the influence of which tells on the development of the economic structure not only during the course of the entire life of a given generation, but even after its departure from the historical stage, as a result of the spiritual influence of older generations on newer ones. Hence the historical continuity of the specific characteristics of various national groups of workers (for example, the Russians, the Georgians, the Estonians, the Germans), each of which as it were bears the imprint of the path of development of those nations over the course of centuries. As far as the social type of worker that prevails in every period appears to be the result not only of present, but also of earlier existing social relations, to that extent does it command great momentum and does not give itself up easily to coercion by the administrative organs.

However, the tenacity of the workers' social attitudes does not remove the necessity for their purposeful formation by socialist society, first and foremost by way of perfecting the social mechanism of economic development. For although this mechanism is not capable of changing the existing type of worker as is necessary in the short term, the results achieved in this respect positively affect economic development in the long run and have substantial influence on the development of society as a whole.

IN the light of what has been said, we must admit that the social mechanism of economic development as it functions at present in the USSR does not ensure satisfactory results. The social type of worker formed by it fails to correspond not only to the strategic aims of a developed socialist society, but also to the technological requirements of contemporary production. The widespread characteristics of many workers, whose personal formation occurred during past five-year plans, are low labour- and production-discipline, an indifferent attitude to the work performed and its low quality, social passivity, a low value attached to labour as a means of self-realization, an intense consumer orientation, and a rather low level of moral discipline. It is enough to mention the broad scale of activity of the so-called " touts," the rampant spread of various " shady " deals made at public expense, the development of illegal output, of irregular registrations, of procuring wages which are not dependent on the results of labour.

It is our conviction that both the expansion of these negative phenomena and the lowering of the rate of growth of production come about as a result of the degeneration of the social mechanism of economic development. At present, this mechanism is " tuned " not to stimulate, but to thwart the population's useful economic activity. Similarly, it " punishes " or simply cuts short initiatives by the chiefs of enterprises, in the sphere of production organization, aiming at the improvement of economic links. Nowadays, higher public value is placed not on the activities of the more talented, brave and energetic leaders, but on the performances of the more " obedient " chiefs, even if they cannot boast production successes.

An important source of social tension in the economic structure is not only the " inharmoniousness," but also the clash of interests between vertically aligned groups: between workers and foremen; foremen and the chiefs of enterprises; chiefs of enterprises and administrators in the ministries.

Finally, the centralized system of rules and norms of economic activity, which was created over the course of decades, has now become tangled to an unbelievable degree and many of its elements have become outdated. The " economic labyrinth," called upon to direct the workers' behaviour in the channel needed by society, actually consists of a multitude of " saps " and " manholes," which allows the achievement of the same income by a significantly easier route. This not only extensively promotes undesirable practices, but also the formation of a type of worker who is alien to genuinely socialist values.

THE solution to actual problems of Soviet economic development is closely connected with the perfection of the social mechanism of its development. It is precisely here that the more complex problems are concentrated today, and it is precisely from here that we should begin work on overcoming the negative tendencies in the economic life of the country.

But, in order to put the social mechanism of economic development "in for repair," it is necessary to study it, to understand its internal structure, expose its weak points and establish ways of strengthening them. A new branch of science—economic sociology—must take upon itself the resolution of these tasks. The object of its investigations is the interaction of the economic and social spheres of society, of economic and social processes, including the definition of economic conditions for achieving social aims, analysis of the social factors in economic development, and the prognosis for its social results. The following points make up the picture of the system of scientific tasks in this regard:

1. The study of the economic structure of society, that is the analysis of social groups distinguished essentially by their position in the economic sphere, their place and role in the development of the economic structure, the level and source of their income. In comparison with the social, the economic structure of society is more concrete: it embraces not only class, but territorial, departmental, professional, official, salaried and other groups. Analysis of this structure presupposes an investigation into its quantitative "incompleteness," into the socio-economic positions within it, and also into the links and interaction between opposite groups of workers.
2. Investigation into the social self-awareness of economic groups—their value orientations, needs, interests, motives for activity. The social typology of members of society according to the modes and motivation for their behaviour in the economic sphere. Clarification of the most important factors which form the various social types of worker, of possibilities for and ways of directing this process.
3. Analysis of the concrete regular patterns of behaviour of economic groups in the social sector of production, in the private and domestic economy, in the spheres of production, distribution and exchange. Clarification of the dependence of forms of behaviour on the social qualities of the subjects (workers, consumers, and so on) on the one hand, and on the socio-economic conditions for activity, on the peculiarities of the existing economic system, on the other.
4. Study of the forms, conditions and results of the interaction of organs of economic administration with economic groups. Analysis of the practice of state regulation of economic activity and of the behaviour of groups, of their reactions to state controls, of changes in their behaviour under the influence of altered economic and labour legislation, of new economic regulations, etc.
5. The establishment and elaboration of methods for integrating the interests of economic groups, between the groups themselves and with the interests of society, of fuller and more effective use of the human factor in production at all levels and in all links of the economic system. In such cases where it is possible, there should be experimental checking of the more progressive forms of social and economic relations.

6. In conjunction with other scientific disciplines (political economy, law, social psychology, cybernetics) there should be the establishment, elaboration and practical examination of an integral "model" for the social mechanism of economic development, based on the economic mechanism, with effective feedback which would ensure the intensive development of production in the first place, and, secondly, the formation of a genuinely socialist type of worker.

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We have examined but a few of the problems connected with the need for and ways of mobilizing social reserves for the development of the socialist economy. In fact, the spectrum of problems in this field is broad and varied. But enough has been said to draw the attention of participants in this scientific seminar to the questions that we would like to put forward for discussion.

Translated by Teresa Cherfas

New Technology and the Soviet Predicament

O. L. Smaryl

IN our century anyone who ignores the teachings of Karl Marx does so at his own peril. Marx's materialist conception of history has changed our whole outlook. Can there be any doubt nowadays that when " the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production . . . these relations turn into their fetters," or that " new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself"?

If Karl Marx were to rise from his grave what would he see? New, higher relations of production maturing in the womb of the present society. These new relations are usually referred to as " Information Technology," and they have indeed a lot to do with both information and technology, but not in the traditional sense. " Automation " would perhaps be a better word but for its old-fashioned ring; it has been with us for too long. I propose to call it "Super-Automation" (and risk the wrath of those who quite legitimately object to the popularity of this prefix). What can Super-Automation do? Absolutely everything. A cow may be automatically lassoed at a Texan ranch and may appear as roast beef on your dining table in Tunbridge Wells without ever having been touched by human hand, or a rocket can be instructed to find on the open seas the good ship *Queen Matilde*, land five yards away and sing " Happy Birthday " to all who sail in her.

How will Super-Automation affect our society? Radically. Much more radically than the Industrial Revolution. First, work will become an optional activity. Secondly, the pattern of technological progress will fundamentally change. Mass production will still be the concern of large conglomerations but major innovations will come mainly from small groups of highly creative people. The family firm will be resurrected, and secrets of software will be transferred from father to son (or from mother to daughter—I have no intention of picking a quarrel with feminists). This is a fascinating subject to discuss and I would love to come back to it one day, but as the title indicates my main purpose in this article is to analyse the effect of new technology on Soviet society.

THERE is no doubt, of course, that Soviet society will either have to change or collapse. The present relations of production are obviously fetters which prevent the blossoming of a new society. The Soviet leaders might try to resist the pressure of new technology but, as Marx predicted, they are bound to fail. One cannot fight historical inevitability.

Why is the new technology incompatible with the social relations

reigning in the Soviet Union? One could actually argue the opposite case. Will not some aspects of Super-Automation make the system work better? Is not the rise of computers a godsend to the KGB? Do they not facilitate the collection and storage of all possible information about all Soviet citizens? They do, of course, and there is no doubt that every single day sees the installation of new computers at various offices of the KGB. But what is the good of it? They perfect a system which for all practical purposes has already reached perfection. It is like introducing expensive safety precautions into a railway system in which there have been no accidents for the past 60 years.

Which aspects of Super-Automation should the Soviet authorities fear? First, they cannot allow the spread of personal computers and their paraphernalia (called peripheral devices in the official jargon). A properly coded computer, aided and abetted by a printer, could appear to any KGB investigator as poised to print the collected works of V. I. Lenin, whereas as soon as the agent is out of sight it could churn out the latest news broadcast of the BBC or the last seven editions of a popular *samizdat* paper.

The idea that anyone can store vast amounts of information must obviously be reprehensible to the Soviet authorities. So their citizens, as far as personal usage is concerned, will be unlikely to graduate beyond the common calculator. Is this such a serious disadvantage? Will it precipitate the collapse of the Soviet system if millions of children are deprived of the chance of playing Space Invaders? Surely not.

The heart of the matter lies in the economic consequences of Super-Automation. I have no doubts that Soviet engineers will be as good as their Western counterparts in super-automating steel plants, but as time goes on economic power will reside less and less in the possession of steel works. As mentioned before, the contributions of small economic units motivated to a large extent by high profits will become crucial. Since the Soviet system of production cannot accept the profit motive, and cannot possibly condone the diffusion of economic power, the creativity of hundreds of thousands of potential computer enthusiasts will not be harnessed. So it is not only the security aspects that will prevent the widespread use of computers by Soviet citizens, it is the unwillingness of the Soviet authorities to relinquish economic power. As a consequence the Soviet Union will fall further and further behind in the economic race. In order to hide this fact they will have to isolate their own citizens more and more from the outside world, which will further accelerate their economic decline.

BUT even then, will the system collapse? Could not an economically weak Soviet Union carry on indefinitely? Its security apparatus will surely be able to prevent any internal rising, so what could possibly cause the collapse of the system?

I have deliberately left until last the discussion of Soviet military potential. The main question is as follows: if the organization of Soviet

society cannot lead to high economic efficiency, and if no more than a certain percentage of the national income (no more, say, than 75 per cent) can be diverted to military purposes, at which stage will the military leaders demand action?

I can envisage three scenarios. In the first, the Soviet military leaders decide that the economic race cannot be won and start a nuclear war. There is no need to elaborate much further. The Soviet system will collapse, and so will everything else.

In the second scenario there will be a "palace revolution." The military (who reputedly do not come from the most intelligent section of the population) will take power on the assumption that they can run the economy better. In that they will most certainly be mistaken. The barrel of a gun is of little help in the introduction of Super-Automation. Such direct military rule is bound to end in disaster.

The third, and to my mind most probable, scenario starts with the recognition that in order to increase economic efficiency the rigid bureaucratic control of industry must be relaxed. Consumer industry will be opened to Super-Automation, some elements of competition will be permitted and, belatedly, they will allow the emergence of small private firms which will be able to work as subcontractors to the state sector. I believe these methods will help to improve efficiency, including military potential, but not sufficiently. The military will live in the perpetual fear that the latest Western products of Super-Automation will be able to intercept *all* Soviet missiles and, wisely, will advise caution to the politicians. In international relations the Soviet Union will adopt increasingly softer stands. It will first withdraw its support from the various revolutionary movements and then, slowly and reluctantly, will relinquish its hold over Eastern Europe. This will coincide with an internal regeneration of cultural values; literature will flourish followed by further relaxation of control. Economic efficiency will increase accompanied by a spread of pluralistic ideas, and there, at the end of the tunnel, will loom the inevitability of free elections.

Marx was, no doubt, right. It is all just a question of Economics.

Communism and the Plight of the Poor

Nick Eberstadt

FOR better or worse, the fate of governments and the plight of the poor are bound together today as never before. A remarkable evolution in both the conception and the machinery of government over the course of the twentieth century has seen to this. Poverty has become a matter of state, and the expeditious alleviation of material want has emerged as a basic measure of the success of contemporary regimes. The recognition that mass deprivation and pauperism can be controlled or even entirely eliminated by effective government policy has made the modern state, in a very real sense, a dependent of the poor who live under it. In part, this is a result of pragmatism. In an era of total war and state-led social campaigns, logistical exigencies virtually dictate sensitivity to poverty for any ambitious government: mass deprivation, after all, can only place limits on the resources that statesmen may marshal for great national exertions. But it is not only crude calculation that tethers the modern state to the material condition of its people. Moral attitudes towards mass poverty have changed radically since the nineteenth century. Indeed, to an extent that would be unwise to underestimate, a government's record of performance against poverty is now taken as a reflection of its legitimacy—its right to be a government at all.

The awakening of government to mass poverty, and the systematic application of its energies to the relief of ignorance, disease, hunger and destitution, may be traced to many causes and events, but perhaps the most important of these has been the birth of the Marxist-Leninist state. With the consolidation of Soviet power over the wreckage of the Russian empire at the end of the First World War, a fundamentally new form of government came into being. The new state was at once secular and messianic, and saw rising living standards for the masses as part and parcel of salvation. The nascent Soviet regime claimed special insight into the problems of poverty, inequality and injustice, promised special results in relieving these afflictions, and demanded special powers and authority so that it might make concrete its vision of an earthly paradise. The party and state that implanted themselves on Russian soil immediately undertook to transform totally both economy and society in the territories under their command, and presented the great variety of upheavals they set in motion as part of a larger effort to serve the poor and hasten material progress. The leaders of this continuing revolutionary "social experiment" insisted that they were building a system whose ability to improve life for the common people could not be equalled, and insisted that other systems of governance less effective in aiding the poor than their own had no right to survive.

Since the Russian revolution of 1917, Marxist-Leninist states have been erected in Mongolia, Korea, China, Vietnam, Cuba and throughout Eastern Europe. All told, these states preside over about a third of the world's population. Despite the great differences in histories, cultures, and economic levels of the peoples over whom Marxist-Leninists came to rule, despite the striking differences in the struggles which brought radical leaders to power, and despite the crucial distinctions in inclination and strategy among the parties and the national figures who planned these respective marches into socialism, the campaigns for material progress and their results in these many different countries are in many ways alike. There have been recognizable rules and difficulties in this series of battles against poverty. It is possible to identify these and to speak of the plight of the poor under Marxist-Leninist rule as we have known it. These are some reflections on this evolving relationship between Marxist-Leninist governance, poverty and material progress.

WHATEVER the motivations of those it attracts or the intellectual merits of its nuances, Marxism-Leninism is first and last a strategic doctrine. In the cause of constructing Utopia, it is the set of guide-lines for command and control. The primary and decisive consideration in Marxist-Leninist governance is, and must be, the preservation and augmentation of unchallengeable power under the Party's direction. In poor societies where Marxist-Leninists have gained control, there is an objective correlation of interests, if one can excuse the term, between the goals of the revolutionaries and the needs of the broad mass of the poor. A debilitated and illiterate populace can only serve the cause of socialist construction imperfectly. Hunger and social isolation frustrate the full mobilization of society, and reduce the regime's freedom to manoeuvre both at home and overseas. The liberation of women from historical roles of subordination not only expands the labour force, but strikes at a traditional and exceedingly resistant alternative centre of social authority: the family. With the dispossession of capitalists and landlords, opportunities for social advancement can be made to arise for those in the poorest strata. As revolutionary government develops into an established order, the correlation of interests changes. From the standpoint of the Party and those who direct it, social mobility should henceforth be no more rapid than development plans require or political struggles necessitate. The importance of women in the class struggle gives way to a recognition of their importance in reproducing the labour force and filling the cracks in manpower plans. The drive to eliminate illiteracy is succeeded by a concern with preventing the populace from learning certain things. Marxist-Leninist regimes, in short, have something like a " window of opportunity " in dealing with the problems of the poor; as this window closes, it becomes increasingly difficult to implement policies which stand the disadvantaged in good stead.

The Marxist-Leninist regime's preoccupation with command and

control can work to the material advantage of the population in poor societies in the years immediately after a communist party comes to power. Once in charge, a Marxist-Leninist government has an interest in civil order—on its own terms, to be sure, but in civil order nonetheless. It is sometimes easy to forget what a scarce and precious resource civil order has been in many parts of the world. The sad fact of modern history is that less ambitious forms of government have been unable to maintain civil order in important regions of the poor world: the Chinese empire, the Altaic expanse of Central Asia, seemingly even in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. In the short run, the poor almost invariably profit from the restoration of civil order, even when it is imposed on the harshest terms. This fact is less of an insight into the merits of repressive government than a sad reflection on the universally precarious position of the very poor.

The politicization of everyday life is necessary and inevitable under Marxist-Leninist rule. No facet of personal life or social routine is beyond the purview of planners and the Party under Marxism-Leninism, although of course governmental capacities or tactical considerations at any given time may limit the pursuit of certain sorts of policies. In an environment shaped by a government's quest for total control over economic and social life and by its exacting plans for the future, the incidence of poverty ebbs and flows in a special tide. The politicization of life can bring immediate material advantage to targetted beneficiaries, who will gain at the expense of targetted adversaries. (These latter, incidentally, often become a distinct and even hereditary class of *misérables* in the new society.) There are longer-term effects upon patterns of poverty as well, and most of them are adverse. The decision to alter the flow of population to ease pressures on the government has direct implications on the welfare of families. The occasional need, for reasons of state, to disrupt social life and throw the daily routines of great numbers of people into disarray has punitive effects upon those who are most vulnerable, both politically and economically. The absolute primacy of political power over economic power in the determination of living standards has serious implications for both the strategy through which to acquire material comforts and the actual patterns of material comfort in communist societies. None of these basic differences between the nature of poverty in communist and non-communist societies are highlighted by conventional comparisons of international statistics.

WESTERN measures of inequality systematically underestimate even the purely economic dimensions of inequality in Marxist-Leninist states, since the premises behind them are not valid in Marxist-Leninist countries. While equalitarian redistributions of assets and alterations of social entitlements have played an important role in raising a large fraction of the populace out of destitution in some Marxist-Leninist societies, redistribution of output knows both logistical and political limits; these generally become more apparent as revolu-

tionary upheaval fades into the past. In the established Marxist-Leninist states, the overall prospects for combatting poverty now depend primarily upon the ability of the state to improve overall levels of efficiency. As of yet, Marxism-Leninism has found no permanent and regularized solution to the productivity problem. Instead, there appears to be a " Socialist " counterpart to the business cycle, which involves the successive relaxation and tightening of political control as considerations of efficiency become more or less salient. The incidence of poverty in the Marxist-Leninist nations is probably changed at least as much by these cycles as the incidence of poverty is altered by cyclical economic fluctuations in the market economies. But fluctuations in the incidence of poverty in the Marxist-Leninist nations may be even more dramatic than in the market economies, since the latter can pursue " counter-cyclical social policies " and the former cannot.

The correlation between distrust of price signals and the quest for international power is strong within the " Socialist Bloc." This makes not only for economic distortions, but also for a complex politics of subsidy, with implications not only for national but also for international poverty. Within the Soviet bloc the Marxist-Leninist version of the " New International Economic Order " has come into force. In this scheme, the most " politically wealthy " area transfers funds on a continuous basis to the more " politically impoverished " areas to finance their social consumption. As the subsidy grows, independently generated economic growth (or more properly, the need to generate independent growth to maintain freedom to manoeuvre) reduces. While it is true that certain states within the Western alliance structure derive substantial assistance for political reasons (Egypt and Israel, for example), *every* state in the alliance structure of the leading Marxist-Leninist power is deemed strategic, and all are supported in varying degrees. From the standpoint of power politics, this international redistribution of funds may be progressive; from an economic standpoint, it is typically regressive. Material standards of living are higher in most of the Warsaw Pact countries than in the USSR, and in some respects appear to be higher in Cuba as well.

IF we look at statistical indicators alone, the record of the Marxist-Leninist states in reducing destitution often seems to correspond to that of the non-communist nations with whom comparisons would be appropriate; when it comes to inculcating prosperity, their performance for the most part appears poor.

Yet if the Marxist-Leninist states have an undistinguished record when it comes to bringing prosperity to their own people, they have played an important role in bringing material comfort to many countries in the " capitalist world." This dialectic of socialist competition is seldom recognized, yet it is entirely in keeping with the " challenge-response " patterns outlined by C. P. Kindleberger and economic historians before him.

In the Western world, consider only what the effects of the "oil crisis"—the contrived scarcity of international petroleum supply—had on the economies of the less developed countries over the past decade. For most, the immediate repercussions of this series of shocks were quite disturbing: balance of payments deficits, sharp increases in inflation, and slow-downs or even reversals in the rate of economic growth. Over only a very few years, however, governments, industries and people began to adjust themselves to the expectation of constantly increasing real costs of energy. Throughout the less developed world, energy saving practices were introduced, although these were of course adopted very much more quickly in some nations than in others. While some nations—particularly those in black Africa—still appear to be crippled by the oil shock, the surprising fact is that aggregated per capita rates of economic growth in the poor world did not drop after this "disaster." Indeed, until the financial crisis of the early 1980s, their rates of growth actually seemed to pick up. Through no kindness of its own, the OPEC cartel appears to have forced many of the policy-makers in the poor world to learn, and some of the economies to reform. In at least certain cases, this crisis has brought about "dynamic" changes which have improved long-term prospects for the struggle against poverty.

If an oil shock, which causes a state on the receiving end economic inconvenience, can stimulate creative and far-reaching responses on the part of governments, how much more it must concentrate the collective mind of the state to be locked into competition with an adversary who *on principle* denies one's very right to exist! The history of the modern wars shows the extent to which managerial techniques, policy-making capacities, systems of communication and even technology, can be stimulated by life-or-death challenges. Though the need to adapt and respond is not quite as pressing in cold war as in hot war, the patterns of stimulus are not entirely different.

The post-war restoration of Western Europe, and the prolonged boom that followed it, ranks as one of the economic "miracles" of this century. The Marshall Plan and the policies which followed it were specifically conceived to "contain" Soviet expansion. The rebuilding of Japan after Hiroshima under the guidance of American architects is not only a great economic, but also an historic political accomplishment; in large part the impetus for reform and development came from the increasingly menacing political situation in China, Korea and the Soviet East. South Korea and Taiwan, fighting for their very survival, could not afford the luxury of corruption or inegalitarian development; to meet not only the economic but also the political challenge posed by their enemies, they had to incorporate their entire populace into the process of rapid social and economic development. Even in the United States, the seeming success of the East European and Soviet health policies, and the anxiety about being "overtaken" by an antithetical political system may have played a role in the social policies of the past two decades: whatever else may be said about it, the expansion of welfare services in

the United States since the Great Society has dramatically improved health conditions and reduced the incidence of material poverty in this country. It may not be too much to suggest that communism has brought out the best in " capitalism."

To pursue this argument further, it is possible that there is a sort of process of negative selection writ national in the rise to power of Marxist-Leninist regimes. Not all attempts at communist revolution in the post-war world have been successful. In both Greece and Malaysia, for example, communist insurgencies failed to gain the support, legitimacy and power, that would be necessary to establish a new order. By contrast, the existing system could not withstand the communist challenge in Cuba and Vietnam. If we look at the record of these four states over the past generation, we might wonder whether there was not a sort of selection of the fittest at work here. If there was, then it would not be too much to say that *history* appears to be biased against the Marxist-Leninist regimes in their attempts to reduce poverty and to stimulate prosperity.

MARXIST-LENINIST regimes can also profit from history, or more specifically from their inability to alter it. If the efficiency problem dogs most Marxist-Leninist regimes, it has been much less oppressive a constraint in certain countries. East Germany and North Korea seem to have records for achieving economic growth and augmenting productivity that rank high in the world. Incentive structures appear to be less economically compelling in East Germany than in Hungary, or in North Korea than in post-Mao China, yet it is these others who have to grapple with the political dilemmas of insufficient improvements in total factor productivity. The enduring importance of culture and history in the struggle against poverty has not been vitiated by the first generation of Marxist-Leninist rule.

The process of modern economic growth depends not only upon the mobilization of existing resources, but also on what Theodore Schultz has termed " the ability to deal with disequilibria." This is in essence a matter of entrepreneurship, involving competence in discerning and surmounting problems of scarcity in the face of uncertainty. The Marxist-Leninist regimes are systematically handicapped on this score. Information about the ways in which scarcities may best be overcome is transmitted naturally by price signals; when the sounds these signals give off are deliberately muffled, or must be ignored for political reasons, not only immediate output but also long-term *competence* is compromised. The greater the uncertainties in the economic environment, the more serious the costs.

At the governmental level, Marxist-Leninist regimes are economic victims of their own political successes. The shift in the " correlation of forces " towards the socialist camp over the past generation has been responsible in no small degree for the increasing fluctuation in both real levels of international economic activity and nominal international prices. It is not only the monopsonistic role of Marxist-Leninist states in

international markets which is an issue here; the Marxist-Leninist states have encouraged the politicization of " North-South " relations, which in turn further destabilized international economic patterns. Yet market-oriented economies are very much better at responding to these fluctuations and uncertainties than are the centrally-planned systems of the Marxist-Leninst states. The great difficulties which communist nations are now having in coping with their energy problems speaks for this.

At the human level, there is little doubt that the common man is highly sensitive to the problems of dealing with disequilibrium; his well-being, and at times his very survival, depends on this. Yet the signals to which he has become sensitized are principally *political*. Though adroitness and creativity are required for response to either political or economic disequilibria, success in these two arenas goes by different rules. Politics, unlike economics, is a zero-sum game. Preoccupation with political disequilibrium, as a consequence, fosters distinct attitudes towards progress whose long-term impact may be to retard economic development. In the Soviet Union, the third generation of children is now being socialized in an environment in which the importance of successfully responding to political disequilibria is repeatedly emphasized, by both parents and experience. Leaders in the Kremlin cannot be heartened by the thought that they may actually have *succeeded* in creating the " New Soviet Man."

THIS discussion of patterns of poverty in the Marxist-Leninist regimes has concerned itself explicitly—some will probably say single-mindedly—with material conditions. As I hope should be clear, a review of prospects for reducing poverty and stimulating prosperity cannot be conducted through the examination of material conditions alone. The great imponderable in the escape from poverty is incentive and motivation. Yet the study of incentives and motivations is more than a perusal of a probability table: it is an inquest into the human spirit. The quest to abolish poverty in the Marxist-Leninist nations cannot be understood apart from the relation between Marxist-Leninist rule and the human spirit. But here we leave economics, and enter the realms of history, philosophy and religion.

The *Manchester Guardian* and the Soviet Purges 1936–38

Peter Deli

OF all the British newspapers, the *Manchester Guardian* presented the most stimulating analysis of the Soviet Purges. The editorials displayed a clarity and lucidity that was unrivalled in other newspapers and there were detailed reports from the paper's own Moscow Correspondent, from Reuter's and *Press Association Foreign Special* on the mass arrests and the court proceedings of the Great Purges. This coverage of the Purges was matched in its detail only by the *Times*. But it was in the "Letters to the Editor" that the *Manchester Guardian* really stood out from other papers. The "*Guardian's*" columns were open to all contributors, and Mensheviks, Social Revolutionaries and ex-Bolsheviks alike availed themselves of the opportunity to write in and present their interpretations of the Purges. Trotsky himself contributed long articles expounding his position. This wealth of personal experience was to give the *Manchester Guardian* a range and depth of interpretation not to be found in other papers elsewhere. A survey of these letters in the "*Guardian*" was to prove that only those Europeans with direct experience of totalitarian conditions on the continent were fully capable of analysing the Purges and of conveying the feeling of macabre terror.

Editorial Opinion and Reports from the Moscow Correspondent

In August 1936 the first of the great Treason Trials took place with a group of 16, headed by Zinoviev, Kamenev and Smirnov, confessing to having organized a terrorist centre under the guidance of Trotsky. The headlines of some of the reports in the *Manchester Guardian* are dramatic. On Thursday, 20 August 1936, the "*Guardian*" announced: THE STATE TREASON TRIAL OPENS IN MOSCOW. MANY FORMER LEADERS IMPLICATED. PROSECUTOR'S STORY OF PLOT TO SEIZE POWER. NAZI "COMPLICITY" IN MURDER PLAN.[1] On the next day the headlines were concerned with the court proceedings and confessions, and were far more sensational: ZINOVIEFF BROADCASTS HIS PLEA OF GUILTY[2] and KAMENEFF ON HIS "MONSTROUS AIM" . . . ALLEGED MEETING WITH GESTAPO AGENTS IN GERMANY.[3] The last report commented on the fact that many other prominent Bolsheviks were implicated in the court proceedings and under the title "WHO'S WHO" IN THE MOSCOW ALLEGATIONS[4] provided the reader of the *Manchester Guardian* with a

[1] The *Manchester Guardian*, Thursday, 20 August 1936, p. 9.
[2] Friday, 21 August 1936, p. 9.
[3] Ibid., p. 13.
[4] Ibid.

brief summary of the careers of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Sokolnikov, Bukharin, Tomsky, Rykov and Radek.

The reports in the *Manchester Guardian* fully captured the atmosphere in the Moscow court. For example, in an article headed PROSECUTOR'S CLOSING SPEECH IN MOSCOW TRIAL. FIVE HOURS OF VITUPERATION[5] the *Press Association Foreign Special* provides us with a sample of Vyshinsky's " humanity " to the 16 accused who were soon to be shot:

> " This society of political murderers, these beasts, must pay with their heads for their monstrous crime against the Fatherland ... Before us are criminals—dangerous, persistent and brutal, merciless towards our people, our ideals, the leaders of our struggle, the leaders of the Soviet nation, and the toilers of the entire world. No mercy should be shown to these insidious enemies. The entire country is aroused and filled with indignation. To this voice, to this roar of millions of voices raised in indignation by the Soviet people and the toilers of the whole world, I, as representative of the State prosecution, join my voice, the disgusted, indignant voice of the State Prosecutor. I demand that all the mad dogs, without exception, shall be shot."[6]

Even more amazing were the last pleas and confessions of Kamenev and Zinoviev. They were reduced to weeping and pathetic figures and their last pleas, reported by the Moscow Correspondent,[7] presented a sad contrast to the vituperation of Vyshinsky.

The first editorial on the Treason Trials was entitled " The Russian Sentences " and basically consisted of a very strong plea for the preservation of the lives of the 16 accused:

> On every ground it is earnestly to be hoped that these rulers will be clement.[8]

(The editor was William Percival Crozier, graduate of Oxford and son of a Methodist minister.) As a major inducement for mercy, the editor stressed political expediency in the realm of foreign policy:

> Russia's foreign policy will suffer a severe setback if she gives the world another exhibition of panic and hysteria in her internal policy and of inhumanity in her methods of government. She will shake the foundations upon which, to a growing degree, her rapprochement with the West has been built.[9]

Similarly, the editorial stressed as another strong argument in favour of clemency, the adverse effect of the trials and sentences on foreign socialist and communist opinion:

> When the Soviet State reveals a judicial procedure as bad as that of the Nazi State and crushes all elements of criticism with the same ruthless barbarity, the Socialist Workers' faith is apt to become

[5] Monday, 24 August 1936, p. 12.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., p. 9.
[8] Tuesday, 25 August 1936, p. 8.
[9] Ibid.

> lukewarm. The case for a " united front " with Communists (forced by their affiliation to become the apologists of judicial murder) loses force.[10]

The editorial also pointed out that the trials reflected badly on the stability of the Soviet Union and on the political composure of its leaders. Finally, the condemnation of the Soviet Union was characteristically British:

> These arguments of expediency should carry weight in Moscow if no others do. We cannot expect the Russian dictatorship to change its spots overnight and accept the same canons of justice as the benighted bourgeois countries, but it can at least conduct its foreign policy with a modicum of common sense.[11]

Nevertheless, the editorial ended with a movingly humanitarian plea for mercy. At the same time, the editorial stressed that the Soviet government had nothing to lose, but in fact much to gain by keeping the accused alive. Ironically, Trotsky's interpretation that the accused agreed to cooperate with Vyshinsky in return for their lives was used as a final plea for the cause of mercy.

Strong disapproval of the Soviet trial is implicit in this editorial. Yet it is interesting to note that in spite of a brief mention of the Trotsky thesis there was no attempt made to analyse the procedure of the trial; the editorial is basically concerned with the humanitarian problems posed by the death sentence. In the pleas for mercy, however, the editor was not emotional; a closely reasoned argument in terms of what the editors believed were Soviet domestic and foreign interests was presented as an inducement for clemency. This editorial, as an initial reaction of shock to the proposed death sentences on the defendants of the first Treason Trial, serves as an interesting introduction to, and contrast with, many of the more analytical editorials that were to follow.

The trial and execution of the 16 sparked off a bitter controversy in the columns of " Letters to the Editor " although there appears to have been only one editorial commenting on these events. While the letters and controversial articles will be outlined and examined in the second section, there is one item that is definitely worthy of mention here in connection with the editorials and the reports from the Moscow Correspondent and news agencies. Under the heading " Fashions in Dictatorship," the *Manchester Guardian* printed one of Low's famous cartoons. An orthodox communist with a copy of Marx in his hand is pensively looking at Stalin. There is a photograph of Stalin on the wall, but Stalin himself is sitting at his desk with a Hitler moustache and hair-style, admiring a photograph of Adolf. The caption reads: " It's queer how you remind me of someone, Joseph."[12]

[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Saturday, 29 August 1936, p. 14.

ON Wednesday, 20 January 1937, the *Manchester Guardian* reported that a new mass trial was imminent, summarized the main charges and listed some of the more prominent figures amongst the 17 accused, including Karl Radek, Sokolnikov, former Soviet ambassador to London, Piatakov, former Deputy People's Commissar for Heavy Industries, and Muralov, People's Commissar for Agriculture between 1930 and 1934.[13] A day before the trial was to commence the Moscow Correspondent reported on the behaviour of the Soviet press:

> To-day the fury of the press is boundless, and the most savage attacks are made on the prisoners. The Press declares that even the unspeakable villanies of the Fascists themselves is surpassed by the deeds and plottings of these members of what is called the " Parallel Centre " for they collaborated not only with Trotsky but also with the agents of the Secret Services of foreign countries. " Even the Fascists would never yield the territory of their country to foreigners, but that is what the foul Trotskyist beasts were ready to do " is one comment.[14]

The first editorial on the second of the great Treason Trials presents an interesting contrast to its predecessor of August 1936. This time there was no appeal for mercy or clemency; instead the editorial outrightly condemns the entire proceedings. Referring to the report of the Moscow Correspondent on the Soviet press, the editorial attacked Soviet newspapers for denouncing the victims and condemning them as guilty even before the opening of the trials: " Contempt of Court does not appear to exist in Russia."[15] In this editorial Crozier and his editorial staff displayed especial interest in the trial of Karl Radek; Crozier found the charges against him incredible and expressed his doubts on this score very neatly:

> He is accused of being a " Trotskyist." But what is a Trotskyist in Russia to-day? A follower of Trotsky perhaps? Not by any means—but a Marxist nothing more or less. To be a Marxist, a real outspoken Marxist in Moscow to-day is almost as dangerous as it is in Berlin.[16]

With these words the editorial clearly hit upon the deviation of developments in the Soviet Union from an orthodox Marxist course. The editorial also attacked the British Communist Party, drawing attention to the embarrassment of the " faithful " now that the Purges had begun:

> It will be interesting to see what our own Communists who have been willing to deny, condone or excuse many tyrannies perpetrated in Russia will now say, and whether they will utter one word of protest if Radek etc. object if their " adulation hitherto " is condemned.

The reports in the *Manchester Guardian* do make it clear to the reader that Radek in his confession behaved in a manner markedly different

[13] Wednesday, 20 January 1937, p. 6.
[14] Friday, 22 January 1937, p. 6.
[15] Saturday, 23 January 1937, p. 12.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

from the abject performances of Zinoviev and Kamenev. In the earlier trial, Reuter's report to the "*Guardian*" cited an interesting example of over-confessing:

> "I am morally and politically responsible for all the conspiring groups—even those I did not know about."[18]

This was followed by a vigorous attempt on the part of Radek to prevent his being indicted as a criminal offender. He admitted to the charges of political deviation and treason but posed an interesting paradox for the prosecution in relation to the purely criminal charges:

> "If we were criminal offenders what assurance would there be that we are telling the truth?"[19]

Neither Crozier nor the Moscow Correspondent attempted to draw any conclusions from Reuter's report of Radek's confession. The Moscow Correspondent confined himself to *verbatim* accounts of the court proceedings with one attempt at analysis by comparing the organization of the two trials by the prosecuting authorities:

> The lessons of the Zinovieff affair have obviously been taken to heart by this court and Vyshinsky systematically attempted to plug every possible loophole which he thought might provoke again the wave of scepticism which was expressed by the foreign press in the earlier trial . . . In the Zinovieff Trial many of the allegations were nebulous but in the present trial detailed allegations were made and all are admitted by the accused.[20]

The main editorial on the second Treason Trial began by expressing complete mystification at the court proceedings:

> Every suggestion that has yet been offered to account for its mysteries remains possible and not one of them wholly convincing.[21]

Crozier failed to speculate on the motives or meaning of Radek's confession. He believed that the evidence of the prisoners had been proved false in detail but asserted that:

> guilty or innocent, it is equally difficult to explain their unanimous confessions.[22]

The editorial concluded bitterly:

> No other modern Government has so perverted its propaganda as to broadcast an appeal to all children in the schools asking them to express their patriotism in an ecstasy of passionate hatred for men who, whatever crimes they have now committed (if indeed they have committed any) once helped to bring about the Revolution.[23]

The editorial, although condemning the Soviet system, failed to under-

[18] Monday, 25 January 1937, p. 9.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Wednesday, 27 January 1937, p. 11.
[21] Monday, 1 February 1937, p. 8.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.

stand or analyse its mechanism. To criticize the Soviet dictatorship for its failure to allow an outlet for its opposition is to impose British democratic standards on Russia. At this stage there was no attempt made in the editorials to examine how the Purges were geared to eliminate potential opposition or how the trials were designed to humble the mighty, provide scapegoats and justify the policies of the authorities.

ON 5 April 1937, the Moscow Correspondent reported the dismissal of Yagoda, chief of the GPU. He added that it was being suggested that Yagoda used his position to further the designs of the Trotskyists and that Yagoda's protection provided the answer to the question of how they had been able to continue plotting for over a decade without being exposed.[24]

An editorial entitled " Darkest Russia " appeared the following day. This editorial, one of the more penetrating and important, was to spark off a serious controversy in the columns of " Letters to the Editor." In its commentary on the significance of the dismissal of Yagoda the editorial contradicted the views of the Moscow Correspondent on the previous day. Yagoda's fall from grace

> can only have increased the bewilderment of the outside world. For Yagoda, at least, can hardly be a Trotskyist seeing that it was he who organised the downfall and expulsion of Trotsky himself.[25]

Crozier also found it difficult to imagine Yagoda " long known as the scourge of wreckers "[26] as a wrecker. His main deviation was when he joined the " Right " opposition of Rykov and Bukharin in protest against the ruthless collectivization policies of 1929:

> Yet to-day Bukharin and Rykoff are called Trotskyists and it would not surprise anyone if it were announced that Yagoda too had been perverted by that powerful influence.[27]

After predicting that the label " Trotskyist " would be extended to a diversity of the accused, the editor speculated on how Yagoda, the man who arranged so many confessions, would behave at his own trial. In the light of a speech by Stalin to the Communist Party a month before, where he

> drew a picture of Russia that might make the boldest Communist tremble and the stupidest think[28]

the editor predicted a vast extension of the Purges and pointed to their full irony:

> But even if we give up trying to explain these events, it is surely odd if Stalin can trust no one in Russia of any importance. It must be a little demoralising to the public to learn that every Old Bolshevik is

[24] Monday, 5 April 1937, p. 6.
[25] Tuesday, 6 April 1937, p. 10.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.

> treacherous, corrupt and criminal, and that the man who for sixteen years controlled its private life is himself no better than its victims.[29]

THE news of Marshal Tukhachevsky's disgrace was first analysed in an editorial on 12 May; the trial and execution of the Red Army generals occurred a month later. It is interesting that in this editorial, " Fallen Heroes," new developments within the Red Army were interpreted almost entirely in terms of a struggle over foreign policy. After reporting that Tukhachevsky had been relieved from his post and appointed to the minor position of Commander of the Volga Corps, the editorial said:

> The cause of his downfall is clearer or at least less mysterious than in the case of other eminent Russians. It is probably not Trotskyism which has brought the Marshal low but his determined views on foreign policy. He is known to have been one of the chief exponents of a close alliance with France and to have placed great hopes on the Franco-Soviet Pact.[30]

After contrasting Tukhachevsky's views with those of Voroshilov and Yegorov, who were either lukewarm to the French or openly pro-German, the editorial concluded that

> there is a distinct possibility that Russia, having discarded the Trotskyist " heresy " of world revolution and having gained confidence in her own strength, may retire into a new and self-willed isolation.[31]

Shortly after this first intimation that the position of the Red Army leaders was insecure, reports began to come through giving a glimpse of the wide extent of the Purges. For example, the Moscow Correspondent reported that the Soviet authorities were clearing the country of foreigners and that some German refugee communist women had been handed back to the Nazis in Germany to face an uncertain fate.[32] An editorial entitled " The Wreckers " also indicated the wide extent of the Purge. Commenting flippantly, " The Soviet Purge goes merrily on,"[33] the editorial described how the labels of " Trotskyist " and " wrecker " were attached to anyone who did not perform his job as the Party " bosses " in power thought it should be done. Crozier cited as an example of this the purging of personnel in the tin industry twice in the previous three years and concluded with a whimsical historical analogy: the medieval alchemists were continually purged but in spite of this incentive they failed to transform metals into gold.[34]

An editorial entitled " The Manifold Purge " discussed the purge of the Red Army generals in June 1937 and attempted to give a more comprehensive analysis of the terror:

[29] Ibid.
[30] Wednesday, 12 May 1937, p. 10.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Saturday, 15 May 1937, p. 12.
[33] Wednesday, 19 May 1937, p. 8.
[34] Ibid.

> The purge cannot truly be described as one sequence of events. Except for the name " Trotskyist " which is now used as a generic description for anyone who disagrees with the official policy of the moment, who is inefficient, immoral or unfortunate, there is not necessarily any connecting link between Zinovieff, Tukhachevsky and some wretched industrial commissar in Siberia, who suffer together.[35]

In an interesting comparison with the Hitler Purge in June 1934 the editorial stressed that in Germany, also, there was no single explanation for the diversity of victims. In the Soviet Union the writer indicated the existence of three distinct categories amongst the victims of the Purges:

> There is the political attack on the " old Bolsheviks " with which the Purge began; there is the extraordinary attack on the military leaders of the Red Army which is now going on; and there is the continuing and widespread purge of industrial managers initiated by the speeches of Stalin and Molotov at the party congress in March this year. Except for calling the victims " Trotskyists, wreckers and enemies of the people " the authorities have hardly attempted to show that these three are connected.[36]

The division of the victims of the Purges into three categories indicates some awareness of the extent of the Purges, although no attempt was made to discuss the actual process of escalation. However, the editorial did draw attention to the absurdity, on the part of the Soviet authorities, of using one label to describe three distinct categories of victims:

> If the thousands of suspects really had been Trotskyists united by a faith in a particular interpretation of Marxist doctrines, Stalin might now be in Mexico and Trotsky in Russia.[37]

Stalin's attack on the Red Army was considered by the editor to be a dangerous adventure, although the possibility that the dismissed generals may not have had a common policy and, therefore, may not have represented a popular movement was also put forward. The editorial also discussed the impact of the Purges on the mass of the people:

> As for the people, the " workers," they may even find a certain pleasure in seeing the mighty humbled, reflecting that, although there may still be class distinctions, poverty and obscurity have their compensation.[38]

Certainly the trials were partly designed to provide scapegoats and to deter further " oppositional groups." Yet the editorial provided a one-sided perspective by underestimating the impact of the Purges on the common people. The Purges were in fact far more widespread than the editor believed. The elimination of national minorities, the institutionalization of denunciation, the extensive persecution of followers of any

[35] Friday, 11 June 1937, p. 10.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.

arrested Party official or administrator; all these factors contributed to the escalation of the Purges and the extension of the terror into the ranks of the workers and citizens of Soviet Russia. Yet in spite of these omissions, this editorial by its division of the Purge victims into three categories is more perceptive than those that preceded it. The editorial finally concluded on a strongly condemnatory and moralistic tone:

> But if this method of government contents Stalin and the Russian people, it will not persuade the rest of the world to follow their example. It should be some solace to Trotsky in his weary exile, that should the world revolution ever come its leaders will not be likely to claim Stalin as the apostle of Utopia.[39]

On the same day as this editorial, the Moscow Correspondent reported that the Russian spy hunt was in full swing and referred once again to the action taken against foreign residents, and the predicament of the German communist refugees in the Soviet Union.[40] On the next day, Saturday, 12 June 1937, the headlines proclaimed: HIGH RED ARMY OFFICIALS TO BE SHOT.[41] Again the careers of the accused and the charges against them were listed in the article although the trial was to be in secret. Reuter's quoted the reactions of *Pravda* to the sentences against the generals:

> " We have not and we shall not have any mercy for the scouts of the capitalist world. . . . The viper of Fascism is many-headed, but we shall chop off its heads. We shall discover and render harmless all the serpent's tentacles for these tentacles and stings are being sought out by the eyes of millions of Soviet patriots."

On Monday, 14 June 1937, the Moscow Correspondent reported the executions of the Soviet generals. Reports from the " *Guardian's* " Berlin and Paris Correspondents were printed in this issue. Many German officials believed that the Soviet Army was now substantially weaker, whilst the news of the secret trial and executions created consternation in Paris.

A light touch was provided by an editorial under the heading " Calling All Ghosts," which discussed an interesting and overlooked aspect of the Purges:

> There has been some nasty sabotage on the children's front in Central Asia. A Mohammedan priest and a local teacher have been sentenced to death for corrupting infantile morality—by the telling of ghost stories . . . Certainly the two unfortunate story tellers have work to do before they can rest honourably in their graves. Their advanced judges deserve to be visited with every nightly terror until, driven into wild speech, they too are put to death for telling more ghost stories. Once the judges found out that they were ghosts themselves their conversion would be complete.[43]

[39] Ibid.
[40] Friday, 11 June 1937, p. 11.
[41] Saturday, 12 June 1937, p. 13.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Friday, 27 August 1937, p. 8.

In October 1937 an editorial entitled " The Historical View " reviewed *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation*, the second edition of the famous work by the Webbs, this time without the even more famous " question mark." Crozier, in condemning the views of the Webbs who rationalized the Purges and exonerated Stalin, concluded:

> So long as there is no political freedom in Russia this new civilisation, with all its achievements, will be at the mercy of the men in power. There is, of course, a chance that Stalin and his fellows will be succeeded by men of more generous and tolerant nature, but is it not just as likely that they will be narrow minded intriguers and adroit committeemen.[44]

Moreover, Crozier explicitly distinguished between contemporary newspaper analysis of the Purges and the views of foreign historians:

> It will be for the historian of the future to say whether or not the present phase is indeed a passing one, leading to better things. The contemporary's duty is rather to criticise what he sees, even to exaggerate the evils, lest Soviet Communism instead of becoming " a new civilisation " may rather resemble the oldest of all.[45]

In affirming this right to criticize contemporary developments in the Soviet Union, the " *Guardian* " adopted a far stronger and more pessimistic tone than Kingsley Martin of the *New Statesman*.

THE editorial of Saturday, 11 December 1937, entitled " The Model Election " was noteworthy mainly for its interesting technique in attacking the Soviet Constitution and method of elections. Crozier began conventionally by pointing out that in the Soviet elections there is no choice for the elector, only one set of candidates, and that the papers have to be dropped unmarked into the ballot box. He indicated obvious similarities with plebiscite techniques in Nazi Germany but then put forward what at first appeared to be an interesting defence of the Soviet Union:

> It is easy enough to make fun of these elections [but this is] however not entirely just. The Soviet leaders have never actually claimed that they were introducing political freedom and democracy as we understand it. These absurd claims are made by Communist sympathisers in this and other countries who continually injure their own cause by such nonsense.[46]

The Soviet elections were criticized in the editorial on far more basic grounds; the Soviet assumption that Russia is a classless society, and that in a classless society there can be no true conflict of interests, was attacked. The editorial referred to the divisions betwen workers, peasants and intellectuals in the Soviet Union and also mentioned the elementary clash between males and females. In this context Crozier invoked the law

[44] Thursday, 21 October 1937, p. 8.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Saturday, 11 December 1937, p. 10.

legalizing abortion, desired by the women and which the men repealed. Finally, Crozier referred to the current Purges and the Moscow Trials themselves as evidence of basic divisions. Temporarily ignoring the question of the guilt or innocence of the accused, he asked:

> would these men have become traitors and spies and wreckers if they could have voted for a party which expressed their views?[47]

This argument was utilized by both the *Daily Herald* and the *New Statesman* in their attacks on the Soviet system. Cogent though it may be, it constitutes an imposition of Western constitutional standards on Soviet society. Both the accused and the prosecutor in the Moscow court accepted the élitist theories of Lenin and the idea of a monolithic party. They spoke and thought in terms of concepts that were alien to the Western democracies. The editorial ended on a strong condemnatory note:

> In such a State, elections as we understand them can have no place. The Russian word for " election " means " choice," and in every language and in every country election without choice is both a paradox and a fraud.[48]

The editor was to greet the actual election results with editorials as ironic and bitter as the one analysed above. Far more biting is the cartoon—and on Tuesday, 14 December 1937 the " *Guardian* " once again printed one of David Low's excellent cartoons. This time it depicted the entire predicament of the Left in its attitudes to the Soviet Union. We see a drawing of a " would-be-Friend " of the USSR looking in bewilderment at two young people enthusiastically holding aloft a banner:

> " Union of Party and Non-Party, Hail the New Democracy."[49]

Behind them two black shadows hold a different banner:

> " Another batch of Incomprehensible Arrests, Disappearances, Executions and Disgracings."[50]

On Thursday, 20 January 1938, The Moscow Correspondent reported a NEW PHASE IN SOVIET PURGE. THE UNIMPORTANT INNOCENT MAN NO LONGER TO SUFFER. CONCENTRATING ON " ROTTEN LEADERS."[51]

This was followed the next day by an editorial entitled " About Turn in Russia" analysing this new development:

> It is a favourite device of the Soviet dictatorship to enforce some ruthless policy upon the Russian people and then, when the object had been achieved by untold brutality and hardship, to win popularity by denouncing excesses.[52]

The editorial cited as one example of this Stalin's " Dizzy from Success "

[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Tuesday, 14 December 1937, p. 12.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Thursday, 20 January 1938, p. 11.
[52] Friday, 21 January 1938, p. 10.

speech in 1930 after the peasants had been ruthlessly forced into the collectives. The editorial indicated that this device was being employed again with the decrees published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party calling for a halt to the mass expulsions from the Party and widespread denunciations within. It was, however, stressed that this

> decree alone does not justify the hope that the purge itself is ended.[53]

Moreover the editorial did not, and could not, accept the view that the excesses

> so openly admitted are due only to the wickedness of overzealous officials and ambitious careerists. If that was true they could have been stopped long ago . . . A year ago, Stalin the huntsman was urging on his hounds: now he is calling them off.[54]

In an analysis of the effects of the Purges, the editor saw the primary consequence as the consolidation of Stalin's dictatorship:

> He has removed all the tallest poppies in the field. The famous are gone, the brilliant are gone and the dangerous are gone.[55]

With the removal of the Old Guard, the elimination of the potential oppositions, the cost of the Purges was great. The editorial pointed to the lack of able administrators and diplomats, and indicated that the fear of accepting responsibility was handicapping and crippling industrial and administrative efficiency. The editor believed that it was inevitable that the unrest caused by the executions and dismissals should have penetrated the ranks of the masses, and reiterated that Stalin's present actions were calculated to win the sympathy of the ordinary people. Once again the editorial ended on a bitter note, this time attacking the docility of the Soviet masses:

> In Russia that famous figure the Average Man has come into his own at last . . . No doubt it is a little disconcerting to see their leaders follow each other into oblivion so rapidly but after a time it may even become enjoyable to hear the crash of the mighty as they fall. Is not the great and wise Stalin, the source of all their happiness, always there to save them from the consequences of his own command?[56]

It is clear that one constant theme of the editorials was the belief that the Average Man was relatively untouched by the events of the Purges.

BY the end of February 1938 it was becoming clear that there would be a third public Treason Trial and on 1 March, a day before the trial was scheduled to open, Reuter's once again reported on the abuse in the Soviet press, quoting extensively from *Pravda*:

> " The whole world will shudder with indignation when it learns of the monstrous plot, the nightmare, the heart-sickening crimes

[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.

committed by a band of outrageous murderers, spies and Fascist plotters . . . The block of Trotskyists was an abominable band of professional wreckers, spies and murderers aiming at the restoration of capitalism in the Soviets. This block drew into its ranks all the rogues that remained of the smashed, annihilated and exploiting classes. They schemed to murder millions of workers and peasants and to destroy Soviet towns."[57]

The first editorial to comment on the trial of Bukharin, Rykov and Yagoda appeared on 3 March 1938. It was concerned with the character of the accused, with the function of the trial as propaganda and with comparing this third trial with its two predecessors:

> These men are dragged out into the light to tell a story and they are chosen for the story they have to tell. From this point of view the present trial should be the most interesting of all.[58]

The editorial emphasized the eminence of the accused in this trial and reflected on the fact that the charges against Bukharin went back as far as 1918. It also stressed that Bukharin and Rykov, who were implicated in the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial, have

> waited two years in prison before they were considered ripe for the picking. What has happened in those two years?[59]

The implications of this last question are interesting although the editorial did not speculate on possible methods of softening up the prisoners during their prolonged period of confinement. However, the editorial did devote special attention to Yagoda, writing optimistically of him:

> At least we can expect a model confession.[60]

In every other respect, such as the attitudes of the court, judge, prosecuting counsel and the vilification of the press, the editorial depicted a basic continuity and similarity between this trial and its two predecessors:

> There is the same morbid atmosphere of things barely imagined and unseen behind the puppets in the dock.[61]

It had become customary for the "*Guardian*" editorials to end on a bitter note, and in this case the editorial condemned those in Britain who were then trying to excuse or explain away the terror in the Soviet Union:

> In this country, no doubt, men will again seek to find some excuse, some explanation for this horror, because in spite of all that has happened the Soviet Union will stand for certain ideals we do not like to abandon. If it were any other country we should not trouble ourselves. We should merely say that here is one more case of tyranny degenerated through power.[62]

[57] Tuesday, 1 March 1938, p. 14.
[58] Thursday, 3 March 1938, p. 8.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.

The reports by the Moscow Correspondent and the various news agencies between 3 March and 11 March contained a comprehensive summary of the main events of the trial. Krestinsky's dramatic retraction of his confession, Bukharin's refusal to accept many of the charges against him and his frequent clashes with prosecutor Vyshinsky, and Yagoda's sullen refusal to answer certain questions, are all outlined in detail.

In an article entitled " Puzzles of the Moscow Trial. The Case of Krestinsky," the Moscow Correspondent penetratingly analysed and examined some of the main mysteries of the third trial. It is interesting that this was the first time the " *Guardian* " printed the Correspondent's view in the form of an article rather than a report. The Moscow Correspondent began this article by explicitly formulating the dilemma posed by all three trials:

> Why should men who were actually wielding the rein of a Government they had helped to create, for the sake of whose establishment many of them had braved prison and exile and fought the Tsarist police, risk everything in order to destroy that Government?[63]

In his analysis of the behaviour of the accused the Moscow Correspondent was also perceptive. He saw Krestinsky's behaviour as the biggest puzzle of the present trial and suggested two possible explanations. The first was that torture had brought Krestinsky back into line in the interval between his two appearances. The second was more elaborate and signified an attempt on the part of the Moscow Correspondent to understand the psychology of the accused:

> The other explanation is that Krestinsky, as an unrepentant Trotskyist, decided to have a fling in Court at the expense of the Soviet judiciary, concentrating foreign publicity on himself and muddling the issue.[64]

The Correspondent concluded his interpretation of Krestinsky's actions by asserting: " If this was his purpose he has succeeded admirably."[65]

Whilst many of the previous reports of the Moscow Correspondent had been confined to summaries of the salient facts and appeared somewhat restrained in comparison with the more outspoken condemnation in the editorials, the Corresondent's portrait of Bukharin in this article left little doubt as to where his main sympathies lay:

> By far the most self-possessed of the men in the dock is Bukharin, of whom a friend once predicted that he would end in a monastery or in an asylum; the present alternative never occurred to this friend. He does not allow the Prosecutor to bully him, and he returns thrust for thrust. He loves to quibble over niceties of definition. Whilst acknowledging his guilt, he constantly tries to discuss the theories of the opposition (and the court always cuts him short), thus showing that he has lost none of his old academic zest and intends to die like a dialectician and a scholar.[66]

[63] Friday, 11 March 1938, p. 11.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.

On Saturday, 12 March 1938, Vyshinsky's closing speech in which he demanded the death sentence for the 19 accused was quoted in detail:

> " This is a stinking heap of human scum stopping at nothing, squeamish about nothing, ready for everything from blowing up plants, wrecking trains, destroying cattle and damaging grain, to murder, espionage and treason."[67]

After these somewhat general remarks, Vyshinsky described Bukharin as a " Judas who tried to conceal his monstrous crimes behind a mountain of verbiage."[68] He also referred to Yagoda as " an unprincipled, hypocritical crafty man."[69] After his speech which lasted five and a half hours:

> there was a general cry of " Shoot the mad dogs and purify the Soviet life from the foul vermin."[70]

On Monday, 14 March 1938, the *Manchester Guardian* carried a report from the *Press Association Foreign Special* on the last hours of the trial. Whilst the rest of the accused pleaded for mercy, Bukharin proved an exception. He accepted full responsibility for his " crimes " but protested against the trial procedure and accused Vyshinsky of having introduced allegations that had not been mentioned at the preliminary enquiry. At the same time, however, he appealed to those Western intellectuals who doubted the authenticity of the trials not to misunderstand Soviet conditions; he declared that he had voluntarily confessed and that he expected adequate justice from the court.

It is unfortunate that this report quoted so little of Bukharin's last speech. His speech inspired Arthur Koestler in his creation of Rubashov in *Darkness at Noon*. Bukharin's last speech was an incredible mixture of resistance and compliance and he laid bare his motives for confessing. In this report, however, Bukharin's speech was summarized and condensed. There was only one important direct citation from Bukharin, related to the parallel he drew between himself and former European Labour leaders, such as Briand and Mussolini, who had become renegades. His soul searching and his attitudes to communism were only briefly summarized:

> Bukharin revealed that he had confessed after holding out for three months. While in prison he had pondered over questions of life and death and concluded that life was not worthwhile if one were to carry the brand of an enemy of the people.[71]

The editorial of 14 March 1938 made no attempt to refer to Bukharin's last speech in order to illuminate the confessions of the third Treason Trial. However, the editorial did attempt an analysis of the function of the trials in Soviet society, Stalin's purpose in degrading and eliminating the members of the Old Guard. Significantly this editorial was printed next to

[67] Saturday, 12 March 1938, p. 17.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Monday, 14 March 1938, p. 10.

another which bitterly condemned Hitler's seizure and occupation of Austria. The editorial on the Moscow Trials was even more bitter and opened dramatically:

> There are still some who manage to believe in Soviet justice: there can be none who believe in Soviet mercy.[72]

The editorial stressed that this trial was far more difficult to follow than its predecessors as it included a bewildering range of charges. As to the veracity of the charges, the editorial was sarcastic at the expense of the " faithful ":

> At this stage neither side is likely to be shaken by more argument . . . Those who found difficulty in swallowing the trials of Zinovieff and Radek will certainly not have found this trial any easier to accept; those on the other hand, who believed in the previous trials would no doubt believe anything as long as it was the official story.[73]

The editorial regarded some confessions as credible and admitted the possibility of a substratum of truth. As for some of the other confessions:

> one could only feel that the GPU had been spending too much of its time at the cinema.[74]

In reference to the charges against the accused the editorial pointed to " the usual damaging mistakes in detail,"[75] instancing the claim of one of the accused to have written to Trotsky and to have received a reply at a time when Trotsky was being conveyed by ship from Norway to Mexico and was not allowed to have any communication with the outside world.

The editorial saw the charges against Bukharin as of crucial importance in understanding the function of the whole series of trials. Bukharin had opposed Lenin's policy of peace with Germany in 1918 and was now portrayed as having tried to overthrow and even murder Lenin. Those with Trotskyist views had been accused of having plotted on behalf of Britain, Germany and Japan, to overthrow the Soviet regime and restore capitalism in Russia. Thus the basic purpose behind the trials was, in the view of the editorial, to deter the mildest of opposition, to prove to the Soviet citizenry that anyone who opposed the government in any way was a traitor and spy. The editorial concluded by discussing the impact of the trials on the Russian people:

> The Russian people are taught not only that it is dangerous to oppose Stalin, to have independent views, to travel abroad and to know foreigners, but that it is treacherous and dishonourable. The average Russian, being a loyal and virtuous (if trifle naïve) citizen takes it seriously to heart. Those few who cannot quite believe that all these great men have really spent their time in murdering aged authors and poisoning cows will at least note that under Stalin's Government death is the most likely reward of initiative. The result, no doubt, is to

[72] Ibid., p. 18.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid.

> strengthen the grip of the dictatorship, but at the same time it must inevitably increase the possibility that some day there will be a real and a serious rebellion against the dictator.[76]

On Wednesday, 16 March 1938, the *Manchester Guardian* announced the execution of the prisoners.[77] Yet the executions of Bukharin, Rykov and Yagoda did not signify the end of the Purges; reports continued to come in of other arrests, sabotages and further executions. For example, in an editorial entitled " Malice Round the Mulberry Bush," the editor wrote:

> France may have invented the term " sabotage " but Russia remains the grand exponent of a dubious art; from nowhere else do we hear so much about " wrecking " or about the tremendous range of the wreckers' devices and intentions.[78]

He was referring to the latest allegations of attempts to wreck the silkworm industry in Armenia.

THE editorials on the Soviet Union in the second half of 1938 and in 1939 were naturally orientated towards foreign policy, checking German expansion, creating an alliance against Hitler. One editorial directly relevant to the Purges appeared on Saturday, 19 August 1938. It described the British communist movement over the previous 18 years. After listing the changing policies and tactics of the party in the 1920s, the editorial indicated an interesting irony:

> the paradox of the situation is that only as the Communist Party has become less revolutionary and more respectable has its membership gone up.[79]

The editorial also contained a detailed description of the new attitudes of the British Communist Party in the 1930s, in the era of the Popular Front, and concluded:

> So now in 1938 we find these terrible people of the extreme left far less revolutionary in utterances than Mr Maxton and his ILP friends, searching for a Popular Front even with the Liberals and Mr Churchill, angling for the middle classes, full of revisionist proposals for all branches of policy, bursting with clever ideas about the best air-raid precautions, awakening suddenly to the curious fact that the British peoples' passion is sport, not politics, and (in the latest report) commending the delights of knitting parties and bazaars since " a sociable and comradely atmosphere is itself part of an education in Communism." Lenin's advice on the " intellectual childishness " of no compromise has been well taken. But what has become of communism?[80]

This editorial represented an interesting supplement to those on the

[76] Ibid.
[77] Wednesday, 16 March 1938, p. 5.
[78] Tuesday, 31 May 1938, p. 10.
[79] Saturday, 13 August 1938, p. 10.
[80] Ibid.

Russian Purges in so far as it indicated the influence of Soviet communism on its British offspring. Events a year later were to confirm the editorial's condemnation of the British party. After the Nazi-Soviet Pact and the outbreak of war the British communists received new instructions from Moscow; once again they were to change their line.

" Letters to the Editor "

The first letter the *Manchester Guardian* printed discussing Russian history in the light of the controversy over the Constitution and the Purges appeared the day after the editorial of 25 August in which a strong plea was uttered for the preservation of the lives of the 16 accused. The letter was entitled " Dangers to European Democracy; Cruelties in Russia as Well as Spain " and R. B. Lloyd, the author, wrote:

> Cruelty is one and the same, indivisible, and should be denounced by humanitarians whoever commits it, and perhaps most strongly of all when committed by those with whom they have political sympathies. In that respect the *Manchester Guardian* is a shining example to us all; it holds the scales with absolute fairness and has protested as vigorously and incessantly against Communist as against Fascist iniquities.[81]

The theme stated in this letter is one of the basic issues of the bitter debate and controversies that were to emerge from the columns of subsequent letters the *Manchester Guardian* received. Separate from the question of " protesting against injustice " were other basic issues the correspondents raised. In refuting the view of people like D. N. Pritt, Pat Sloan and Dudley Collard, who accepted the charges and believed in the confessions, many of the correspondents with first-hand experience of Soviet politics were to raise and present interpretations far more sophisticated than those in the editorial columns.

On Wednesday, 2 September 1936, the *Manchester Guardian* printed a letter from Theodore Dan, leader of the Russian Mensheviks. He had supported the Bolsheviks in the Civil War against the Whites but went into exile in 1923. He argued vehemently in favour of the innocence of the 16 accused who appeared in the first Treason Trial:

> There is not a single document, not a single piece of evidence, not a single precise detail of the alleged plans of assassination, not a single attempt to reconcile the conflicting statements made, and only two " witnesses " both brought into court from prison and both due to appear themselves as defendants in the " second " terrorist trial before the same court! There is nothing but irrelevant phrases in general terms and most incredible of all, the most abject of self-vilification and " confessions " on the part of the accused men, once more without any concrete detail of any sort concerning their " crime," they fairly enter into competition with the State prosecution in branding themselves, and actually beg for the death sentence.[82]

[81] Wednesday, 26 August 1936, p. 18.
[82] Wednesday, 2 September 1936, p. 16.

Whilst Theodore Dan exposed the flimsy nature of the evidence against the accused he provided no explanation of the confessions or of the behaviour of the defendants in court. He did believe, however, that Stalin was eliminating the old Bolsheviks to make the New Constitution a serviceable instrument in the consolidation of his personal dictatorship. In this context Dan placed extraordinary emphasis on Stalin's fear that the workers would use the secret ballot to vote for the opposition. As the later editorials and letters were to indicate, there was little chance of the Constitution being utilized by any opponents of the regime.

A letter by Pat Sloan, a consistent defender of Stalin's policies, appeared in the same issue as Dan's. Sloan had lived and worked in Russia for many years and was a prominent member of " The Friends of the Soviet Union." He accepted the verdict of the Soviet court, emphasized that Zinoviev and Kamenev had had bad records and cited as an example of this their disagreements with Lenin in 1917.[83] Another letter by E. Oldfield argued in a similar vein.[84] On the following day the *Manchester Guardian* was attacked by yet another communist sympathiser who expressed his indignation that the " *Guardian* " should write about a " great country like Russia " as if she was a naughty child.[85]

A long letter from a correspondent signed " JKB " was a refreshing change from the three letters cited above. It is clear that the author had been in close touch with developments in the Soviet Union and unlike Theodore Dan, he interpreted the elimination of the Old Guard as an attempt of Stalin's to convince the doubting capitalist world of the sincerity of his abandonment of Bolshevism. Instead of referring to the New Constitution, he placed the purges in a broader historical context:

> What we have for years been witnessing in Russia is a counter-revolution from within and the destruction of Communism by those who still pay it lip service. For the past decade Stalin has been discarding all the principles and practices of Socialism in the internal organisation of the country.[86]

As examples of this " JKB " pointed to the destruction of the trade unions (it is interesting that he associated this with Tomsky's fall in 1929 rather than with the events of 1921 or earlier) and the creation of a new bureaucracy loyal to Stalin, even when he violated the tenets of Bolshevik theory:

> To-day the members of the Communist party have just as strong a vested interest in the present organisation of Russian society as the capitalist class in other countries has in the continuation of capitalism.[87]

For the author the confessions were largely explicable in terms of the victims' concern for the safety of their families. He cited Kamenev's last speech as proof of this but made no further attempt to examine the

[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Thursday, 3 September 1936, p. 16.
[86] Wednesday, 9 September 1936, pp. 9–10.
[87] Ibid.

psychology of the accused. He was far more perceptive in analysing trends in Russian society and soon returned to his basic themes. He believed that Stalin's doctrine of "Socialism in One Country" was contrary to Marxist-Leninist theory. He accused Stalin of

> bringing forth a hybrid monster which is neither capitalism nor Socialism, which preserves all the worst features of the former and gives none of the benefits of the latter.[88]

"JKB"'s views appeared at first to be in the Trotskyist tradition; certainly his historical analysis resembled Trotsky's. Yet he now posed some interesting paradoxes which undermined the "Trotskyist-Marxist" interpretation of Soviet history. Moreover, his views implicitly pointed to difficulties inherent in any Marxist interpretation of Soviet developments during the Purges:

> If the Socialist reacts from the practice of the USSR to follow Trotsky who still holds aloft the battered banner of world revolution, he must believe that Russia has not been forced along the road to a kind of Tsarist-Fascism by historical necessity but by Stalin. But the Marxist cannot accept this explanation of history in terms of the influence of individuals. He must argue that Russia has become national Socialist instead of Communist of necessity, and that Stalin would have won even if Lenin had lived.[89]

On Friday, 11 September 1936, the *Manchester Guardian* published a letter by Solomon Schwarz, a Russian Socialist who had been a prominent trade union organizer in the Russian revolutionary movement. Schwarz regarded the charges against Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev as obvious nonsense. However, he did examine, only to discredit, the possibility that a Trotskyist-Zinovievist terrorist centre existed between the years 1932 and 1936. The Trotsky-Zinoviev coalition, he observed, collapsed in 1928, and by 1933 their followers had taken opposite paths, with Zinoviev and his associates trying to come to terms with Stalin. Like Theodore Dan, Schwarz concluded that:

> The sole evidence now offered for the existence of a terrorist centre is contained in the confessions of the accused men.[90]

Schwarz also indicated serious discrepancies in the reports of the court evidence published in *Pravda*. For example, he pointed out that the terrorist centre was supposed to include Koklin and Sokolnikov, neither of whom appeared in court. Moreover, he also noticed that Mrachkovsky, Reingold and Dreizer spoke of the attempt on Voroshilov's life as occurring on three separate dates. Schwarz ended on a bitter note:

> It was not defendants that appeared in this trial, but unhappy victims of a monstrous Inquisition, victims of the degraded system of terrorist dictatorship.[91]

[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Friday, 11 September 1936, p. 22.
[91] Ibid.

On 12 September 1936 the views of " JKB " were attacked by William Rust, a prominent communist, who was later to become editor of the *Daily Worker*:

> With extraordinary venom " JKB " describes Russia's economic system as a " hybrid monster."[92]

Rust completely disagreed with " JKB " 's analysis, implied that Trotskyists resented the success of the five-year plans and invoked the Webbs as an authority in an attempt to repudiate " JKB " 's interpretation of the Communist Party as a new aristocracy. Four days later the *Manchester Guardian* received a letter signed by a number of prominent communists and " Friends of the Soviet Union."

> We are much disturbed at the way in which the recent Moscow trial has been used as a pretext for the greater part of our National Press to launch a violent attack on the USSR . . . It seems clear that a conspiracy exists and that the German Fascists were involved, so that we can only strongly deplore the recent scare-mongering, the publication of false rumours about the USSR . . . Such a press campaign is helping Fascism just at a time when it appears further interference by the German Fascists in other countries has been unearthed. We ask the press to show the greatest care not to let themselves become weapons of German Fascism.[93]

SOVIET legal procedures were also defended by the prominent socialist lawyer D. N. Pritt who wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* on 21 September 1936 to attack the views of Solomon Schwarz. Pritt had gained fame by his attack on the fraudulent legal procedures of the Nazis in the Reichstag Fire Trial, although his defence of Soviet law during the Treason Trials was to engage him in far more controversies. In his autobiography *From Right to Left*[94] published in 1965, he continued stubbornly to adhere to his original views on the trials and Purges, long after Khrushchev had exposed and denounced the policies of Stalin.

Pritt began his letter by attacking Schwarz's contention that no attempt was made by the prosecution to prove its case. His arguments against Schwarz were purely legalistic. If the defendants plead not guilty, then it is up to the prosecution to prove its case with material evidence:

> If they plead guilty the prosecution does not need to prove the case at all; all it has to do is to put before the Court, in such detail as it thinks fit and in such manner as the Courts' procedure requires, whatever facts are necessary to enable the Court to pass a proper sentence.[95]

Pritt then attacked Schwarz for doubting the genuineness of the confessions. He asserted that he personally attended the trial with an

[92] Saturday, 12 September 1936, p. 17.
[93] Wednesday, 16 September 1936, p. 18.
[94] D. N. Pritt. *The Autobiography of D. N. Pritt*, Part 1 " From Right to Left." On pp. 108–15 he outlines his views of the Moscow Trial.
[95] Monday, 21 September 1936, p. 18.

open mind and that the proceedings of the court were too spontaneous to have been staged; the procedure appeared completely genuine:

> When I heard men of the intelligence and courage of these defendants making these confessions and making neither any suggestions that the confessions had been improperly obtained nor any attempt to withdraw them, and when I observed that their demeanour was obviously inconsistent with any pressure having been brought to bear upon them at any recent period, I saw no reason whatever to doubt their confessions, particularly as there was often material in the evidence of one or more of the accused to corroborate definitely not merely their own confessions but those of the other accused.[96]

Finally, in response to Schwarz's statement that it was obviously nonsense to suggest that the assassinations of the Soviet leaders were planned in collaboration with the Gestapo, Pritt wrote:

> I do not know why it is " obvious nonsense " when the accused fully confessed it. But is it not at any rate obvious nonsense to suggest that Stalin and other Soviet leaders would conspire with the Public Prosecutor and the judges of the Supreme Court to plan the judicial murder of Zinovieff, Kameneff, and a number of other people?[97]

A week later the *Manchester Guardian* received two detailed replies to Pritt's letter. The first, by Solomon Schwarz himself, attacked Pritt's central belief that the court, in the presence of positive confessions on the part of the accused, had no need to enter into details and examine the confessions:

> Are we to take it as sufficient that the defendants admitted their guilt? But the case is not so simple as that. Only those who confessed their guilt were made defendants in this trial.[98]

The second reply was by Leonard Caplan, a British lawyer who had carefully read the official translation in English of the " Report of Court Proceedings " issued by the USSR People's Commissariat of Justice. Caplan quoted in detail from some of the speeches of Prosecutor Vyshinsky to show that the proceedings were far from reasonable and moderate. He also doubted whether the proceedings moved

> too spontaneously and rapidly for anything in the nature of staging or rehearsing to be possible[99]

and he referred to page 68 of the " Court Report " where Kamenev and Zinoviev both responded to Vyshinsky's questions in a manner that was clearly artificial.

A few days later Pritt was also attacked by a third correspondent, the Labour Party MP Sydney Silverman who wrote expressing surprise that Pritt should assert that confessions rendered evidence unnecessary:

[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Monday, 28 September 1936, p. 16.
[99] Ibid.

> It is important not only that justice should be done but that it should manifestly appear to be done. If there is evidence, not dependent upon the confessions, which supports the confessions, I cannot conceive why the prosecution should not have produced it. If there is not, would Mr Pritt still believe the confessions enough?[100]

ON Wednesday, 7 October 1936, the *Manchester Guardian* published a letter by Anton Ciliga entitled " The Struggle Within Russian Communism." Ciliga was the author of the work *The Russian Enigma*, had spent 9 years in the Soviet Union working in the Comintern, then at Leningrad University, and finally served a sentence for oppositional activities in prison and exile. He left Russia at the end of 1935 and his analysis was a product of his first-hand experience. He saw the Moscow Trials as the third act of a long and bitter struggle within the Party. The first began in 1928 when Stalin adopted the policies of the defeated " Left " opposition and attacked his erstwhile " Right " allies, Bukharin and Rykov. The second act, according to Ciliga, took place in 1932 when Russia was suffering the full effects of Stalin's disastrous policies, and an opposition revived. Before Stalin beat a retreat by adopting the new programme of the opposition, he determined to put its authors under lock and key. Ciliga depicted the present Purges as the culmination of Stalin's reaction to the growth of yet another series of oppositions:

> The assassination of Kiroff and the recent Moscow Trial form the main elements of the third act of the drama. After the retreat of 1933 the Soviet community took stock of the results of the Five-Year Plan, the workers and peasants found themselves betrayed; in place of the old bourgeoisie and nobility the masses saw a new class ruling over them—the bureaucracy. In the place of private capitalism they found State Capitalism. Of the Socialism of the workers there was no trace. Their deep discontent has spread to some of the Communists. Here lies the main source of the growth of various opposition tendencies.[101]

Ciliga's use of class categories in his analysis of developments in the Soviet Union may result in over-simplification but nevertheless provides a powerful contrast with the failings of those who use the label " Marxist " to explain away the events of the Treason Trials and Purges.

On Friday, 15 January 1937, shortly before the beginning of the second Treason Trial, the *Manchester Guardian* published an article by L. Sedoff, the son of Leon Trotsky. Sedoff predicted a series of new trials that would engulf all the leading old Bolsheviks of both the Right and Left factions. He also suggested that the industrial managers would be indicted for sabotage, and the military men for espionage and military plotting; both groups, he believed, would be charged with terrorist acts and with participating in the assassination of Kirov:

[100] Monday, 5 October 1936, p. 18.
[101] Wednesday, 7 October 1936, p. 20.

> We are gradually discovering that Kiroff was murdered not by Nikolaieff but by a steadily growing mass of old Bolsheviks.[102]

Sedoff, like Schwarz, indicated that the accused were described as Trotskyists in order to discredit Trotsky but in reality there was not one Trotskyist amongst them. Sedoff also presented some interesting views on the arranging and procedure of the trials. In the trials the accused were often associated with criminal elements, to further discredit the reputations of the Old Guard. He also indicated that

> the defendants actually brought to trial are carefully selected by means of a long and weary examination, out of a much more numerous host of accused.[103]

Sedoff believed too that the accused were promised their lives as an inducement to confess; that Zinoviev and Kamenev had been double-crossed, and he regretted that the same trick could be used against Piatakov and Sokolnikov, who found themselves in prison before the Zinoviev trial had ended. Piatakov and Smirnov had been accused of attending a conference in Berlin in 1931 in the company of Sedoff, but Sedoff himself effectively refuted this charge:

> According to the official commentators this " conference " took place " under the auspices of the Gestapo " in spite of the fact that in 1931 no Gestapo yet existed. Such mistakes are characteristic of the Soviet legal machinery.[104]

The *Manchester Guardian* created a sensation on Monday, 25 January 1937 by printing a special cable from Leon Trotsky replying to the charges against him (in both the August 1936 trial and that of January 1937) and strongly denouncing Stalin's dictatorship. Trotsky began forcefully:

> All the most infamous State Trials of history—that of Beylis in Tsarist Russia, of Dreyfus in France, the Reichstag trial in Germany—seem to have been no more than ingenuous practical jokes when compared to the series of judicial concoctions now prepared by Stalin in Russia—Stalin, of whom Lenin once said prophetically: " This cook will prepare nothing but peppery dishes."[105]

After this powerful opening, Trotsky turned to the charges. He disclaimed any connection with Radek or Piatakov who had periodically insulted him in the Soviet press, denied being visited by Piatakov in Oslo, and maintained that Romm, who was alleged to have been an intermediary between Trotsky and Radek, was unknown to him. He then stated his desire to ask the State Prosecutor Vyshinsky and Mr D. N. Pritt three questions. These questions are worth quoting in full:

> First, how can one accept the fact that all the men who carried through the revolution, with the one exception of Stalin, have

[102] Friday, 15 January 1937, pp. 11–12.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Monday, 25 January 1937, p. 9.

> become terrorists, enemies of Socialism, agents of the Gestapo, ready to dismember the Soviet Union of Socialist Republics? Secondly, how is it that these " criminals " who for nearly ten years have been committing terrible crimes, can suddeny repent and, after having demanded death for others, suddenly demand it for themselves? Thirdly, how is one to explain that Zinovieff, Kameneff and other leaders of the alleged " Trotskyist group " knew nothing about this grotesque plan to dismember the USSR for the benefit of Hitler and the Mikado, while Radek, whom none of us ever took too seriously, now reveals himself as the head of this world conspiracy?[106]

Trotsky concluded with a personal attack on Stalin and with an analysis of the Stalin dictatorship and bureaucracy:

> If there is any conspiracy, it is a conspiracy of the GPU (the Russian political police). If there is any leader his name is Stalin.
>
> Stalin's totalitarian dictatorship had come into an ever-more serious conflict with the economic and cultural development of the country. He is the embodiment of bureaucracy. The spirit of daring which he learnt in the school of revolution is now applied only to maintain his own omnipotence and his own privileges by methods that are fantastic in their criminal ingenuity.[107]

The next day the *Manchester Guardian* received another cable from Trotsky repudiating the charges of collaboration with the Gestapo. He made it clear that in the last years of the Weimar Republic he had advocated a united front of the German workers to fight the Nazis, and that in 1933, on the accession of Hitler, he would have mobilized the Red Army to bolster the resistance of the German proletariat. Trotsky ended his cable bitterly attacking Stalin:

> In the place of the generation of the Revolution he is putting a row of civil servants ready to do anything as long as they are ordered to do so. He is bringing about the downfall of Soviet Russia.[108]

THE opponents of Sedoff and Trotsky soon replied. On Thursday, 28 January 1937, the *Manchester Guardian* published a letter from the secretaries of " The Friends of the Soviet Union " from Britain, France, Spain, Holland, Czechoslovakia and Belgium, stressing that the defendants had had a fair trial and that the court proceedings were open to the foreign press and diplomatic corps. The letter cited examples of progressives who had become advocates of reaction, pointed to the achievements of the Soviet Union and concluded by affirming the need to protect the USSR from events in Spain and to preserve world peace.[109]

On Tuesday, 2 February 1937, the *Manchester Guardian* received a moving letter from Dr J. N. Steinberg, a Left Social Revolutionary,

[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Tuesday, 26 January 1937, p. 11.
[109] Thursday, 28 January 1937, p. 8.

formerly People's Commissar of Justice in the first Soviet government. Steinberg did not attempt to examine the problem of why the accused confessed to the charges; he was content to leave this problem to the psychologists. He was concerned with stressing the political significance of the trials which he believed proved two things; that deep unrest existed in the country against the government and that the Stalin regime was very isolated. Steinberg failed to consider the possibility that Stalin was strengthening his power through the Purges; his interpretations were clearly influenced by his desire to see an immediate collapse of the Bolshevik tyranny. However, he did emphasize the precarious position of all Stalin's close associates and asked:

> How can construction work be done in an atmosphere of suspicion and death?[110]

Steinberg concluded his letter with a moving plea to progressive elements outside the Soviet Union to protest against Stalin's terror; like " The Friends of the Soviet Union " he emphasized the importance of the Purges in the fight against fascism:

> The time has come when all progressive elements in the world must leave their position of friendly passiveness towards the regime in Russia and demand, in the interest of Soviet Russia itself, a halt to the wave of fear and cruelty. It is absolutely impossible to fight Fascism in Europe when behind the fighters stands Russia setting an example of State terrorism, although it be in the name of Communism. This demand concerns not only the victims of the trials but all Socialists and progressive men and women who in their thousands suffer imprisonment or banishment in Russia. It is better that Russia should change under the moral pressure of progressive elements than under the military or political pressure of the outspoken enemies of Socialism and liberty.[111]

Steinberg's plea reflected the moral position of the anti-Stalinist Left in Europe, in its purest form.

On the same page the *Manchester Guardian* published a letter by A. J. P. Taylor. Taylor's letter had all the verve and brilliance of the first cable of Trotsky, and Taylor's style of sharp paradoxes was in marked contrast to the compassionate pleas of Steinberg. Taylor began by referring to a letter by a Miss Joan Beauchamp who had argued that the only question raised by the trials was the credibility of Stalin or Trotsky—" ' Either Stalin or Trotsky is a scoundrel.' "[112] " If that were all," wrote Taylor flippantly, " we might toss for it."[113] For Taylor the trials reflected on the whole character of the Bolshevik leadership. He posed a paradox similar to the issue raised by Trotsky in his first cable, and concluded with a whimsical attack on Stalin:

> If the guilt of the accused be accepted, we are forced to the

[110] Tuesday, 2 February 1937, p. 18.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Tuesday, 2 February 1937, p. 18.
[113] Ibid.

> remarkable conclusion that Lenin, " the greatest revolutionary leader of all time " in Mr Harry Pollitt's phrase, had an almost infallible gift for choosing as his associates traitors and counter-revolutionaries, who would think nothing of murdering hundreds of ordinary workers in the course of their wrecking activities; and, further, that the one exception, the one just man amongst so many, happens to be the man for whom Lenin had least personal regard and whose one achievement before the Revolution was an act of banditry, the raid on the State Bank at Tiflis.[114]

Taylor, unlike many of the other correspondents, was willing to speculate on the confessions themselves. He stressed that courage was needed to commit such crimes and drawing a parallel between the way Dimitrov and André defended themselves in Germany he found it far more incredible that the accused in the Soviet Union should confess if they were guilty:

> There is no escape from this dilemma: if the crimes were really committed the confessions cannot be voluntary; and if the confessions are voluntary the crimes cannot have been committed. Is it not much more likely that these men, knowing that there is no escape from that vast concentration camp, the USSR, should go through the macabre farce of exaggerated confessions in the hope of saving their families and dependants?[115]

Taylor believed that Soviet Russia was now passing through a similar phase to that experienced by France at the time of Napoleon

> when the revolutionary system is perverted for the personal aggrandisement of one man and the material benefit of his sycophantic adherents.[116]

He drew parallels with those radicals who abandoned the revolution to become Tories and worse still, with those who were prepared to condone all the perversions of Napoleon in the name of the ideals of the revolution. Taylor concluded:

> The ideas and achievements of the French Revolution survived Napoleon, and the ideas and achievements of the Russian Revolution will survive Stalin. But genuine Socialists will cease to be " Stalinists " just as certainly as Beethoven erased his dedication of the " Eroica " Symphony.[117]

The following day the *Manchester Guardian* published a letter by Pat Sloan attacking Trotsky and once again defending the Moscow Trials. Sloan again referred to the clash in 1917 between Zinoviev, Kamenev and Lenin. Sloan concluded his letter with an attack on Trotsky in the form of a paradox; a paradox that contrasted painfully in its transparent avoidance of the issues with the genuine paradoxes so skilfully formulated by Trotsky and A. J. P. Taylor. Sloan wrote:

[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.

> If the Soviet Government is what Trotsky says it is, then Trotsky is the greatest traitor Russia has ever known if he is not conspiring for its overthrow. It is because it is nothing like what he says it is, that his conspiracy is itself treachery to Socialism.[118]

ON Thursday, 4 February, the *Manchester Guardian* received the first of its letters from " YZ " who had been in exile under the Tsar and in 1917 was a member of the executive of the Soviets. " YZ " personally found it impossible to believe that all the nearest friends and disciples of Lenin had become fascists, spies and wreckers and emphasized that if the accusations were true, they revealed a disheartening picture of the decay of the Soviet dicatatorship. He referred to his first meeting with Trotsky in 1902 and whilst using his personal experience as evidence of Trotsky's innocence, he managed to convey much of the atmosphere of pre-revolutionary Russia:

> I met him then, on my way to exile, in a tiny hut in Verkholensk in East Siberia where he served his term as political exile under Tsarism. Some months later he made his escape. I saw his activity in 1905 when he was Chairman of the first Soviet in Petersburg, and admired his courage and dignified deportment in the ensuing trial. As an active member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, I had the opportunity of admiring closely his activity in Petersburg in 1917 and 1918 and of witnessing his astonishing career in the following years. Though his political opponent I must say that he is undoubtedly sincere and uncompromising in his struggle against Fascism as well as in his Socialist ideals.[119]

" YZ " also found it impossible to believe that Trotsky and Radek could enter into an alliance with the fascists when " all the immediate and real advantages are on the side of the Fascists." He tentatively compared the confessions of the accused with those of the witches in the medieval Inquisition. Finally, he saw a system in the folly of a series of trials: the purpose of the 1931 trial was to discredit the Mensheviks and the Democratic Socialist opposition. He was convinced that Stalin was now anxious to protect his regime from the opposition of the communists themselves and interpreted the Zinoviev trial as a blow against the Left communists and the trial of Radek as a blow against the Right wing of the communist opposition.

On 5 February 1937, the *Manchester Guardian* received another letter from D. N. Pritt. Once again he was convinced of the guilt of the court defendants and he again invoked their confessions as proof of this. In answer to the objection that only those who were willing to confess were admitted to the court, Pritt argued, very unconvincingly, that:

> very large numbers of suspects who are arrested and examined do not confess and are released because the case against them proves to

[118] Wednesday, 3 February 1937, p. 18.
[119] Thursday, 4 February 1937, p. 18.

> be weak, so that it is only those against whom the case is strong who come to public trial at all.[120]

Pritt emphasized that Trotsky's ideas on the imminent defeat of the Soviet government in a war with the capitalist states would inevitably encourage him to plot at least to save something from the wreckage. He then reverted to his old theme, stressing the necessity of defending whatever liberty did exist and strongly praised the Soviet Union for the introduction of the New Constitution:

> in a world where nearly every Government is steadily strangling liberty we should be very grateful to find a young revolutionary Government at any rate increasing liberty instead of curtailing it, undeterred by conspirators within and enemies without.[121]

The same issue contained two other letters. The first was by Dudley Collard, a communist sympathizer, who was present at the second Treason Trial and was later to publish a book on it. He was fully convinced of the prisoners' guilt but provided a partial explanation of their confessions that was close to the psychological approach of writers such as Koestler and Krivitsky. Collard cited the speeches of some of the defendants to explain why they confessed to the charges:

> They said that the rapid progress towards general prosperity made by the Soviet Union in the last year or two had undermined their confidence in the correctness of their own views and they began to feel unable to defend them.[122]

Collard even postulated a partial explanation for their original deviation:

> Some years ago, in the first throes of industrialisation and collectivisation, it was certainly far easier to find plausible reasons for arguing that the Soviet Union had embarked on the wrong road, than it is today.[123]

The second letter on the same date was written by a " Former Member of the Comintern." Whilst such writers often had inside knowledge of Soviet developments that was unavailable to British press correspondents, their analysis was sometimes affected by their emotional experiences and their desire to see a collapse of the Stalinist regime. This author attached importance to Radek's confession which he perceptively regarded as two-edged, discrediting both the Stalin regime and the Red Army. He regarded Yezhov, the present head of the GPU, as an admirer of Nazi methods and saw at least two forces in opposition to Stalin. After predicting severe convulsions in the Soviet Union, he concluded on an optimistically anti-Stalinist note:

> The trial and its surprises . . . demonstrated that within the regime differences among the leaders have so grown that it is probably no longer possible to speak of a Stalinist leadership. Stalin thinks he has

[120] Friday, 5 February 1937, p. 20.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Friday, 5 February 1937, p. 20.
[123] Ibid.

> the GPU and the Courts in his hand, but already he is largely in the hands of the GPU, and even as the verdict probably shows, in the hands of so simple a thing as the Supreme Military Tribunal with its three marionette " judges "![124]

WHILST the letter by Pritt on the second trial was to spark off a debate even more interesting than that provoked by the first trial, the *Manchester Guardian* and the British communist paper, the *Daily Worker*, also clashed. The Moscow Correspondent of the *Daily Worker* sent home an extract from *Pravda* attacking the *Manchester Guardian*. On 8 February 1937 the *Manchester Guardian* printed the words of Nadson, Director of the Institute of Microbiology of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, who had written to *Pravda*. There was little need for the *Manchester Guardian* to comment on Nadson, *Pravda* or the *Daily Worker*; it was sufficient a refutation merely to reprint the extract:

> " In those few minutes which I can devote to reading foreign newspapers I have always paid most attention to the *Manchester Guardian* because I considered the paper as probably the most impartial among the British bourgeois press. This increased my indignation on discovering that the *Manchester Guardian* had virtually become a Trotskyist platform. I was left with a feeling of nausea after reading the statements of the Liberal paper."[125]

The next day the *Manchester Guardian* received a letter from Pat Sloan attacking the views of Steinberg and " YZ."

> Both writers simply ignore the admissions of the accused in the court. For Steinberg leaves this question " to the psychologists " and " YZ" leaves it " to the future historian." This is a convenient way of shelving the very convincing evidence that the admissions were genuine.[126]

Sloan also denied the existence of large-scale opposition to Stalin in the Soviet Union.

Pritt's letter of 5 February brought forth a reply from Steinberg on 11 February. In his letter entitled " Is Liberty in the Soviet Republic Increasing?" Steinberg began by pointing to Lenin's will of 1922 and indicating that Stalin was the only one of the six possible leaders whose position was secure. More important, he referred to the trial of the leaders of the Right Social Revolutionaries, such as Gotz, Donsky and others, in 1922. These men stood in a similar tribunal to the old Bolsheviks who were now Stalin's opponents and like the old Bolsheviks were accused of collaboration with an enemy abroad. After elaborating in further detail on Bolshevik techniques of smearing their opponents, Steinberg stressed that the Social Revolutionaries used the tribunal of the trial to pronounce, in keeping with the tradition of Old Russia, their bitter

[124] Ibid.
[125] Monday, 8 February 1937, p. 12.
[126] Tuesday, 9 Februay 1937, p. 20.

criticism against the regime. He then returned to the problem of the confessions in the current Treason Trials:

> How are we to understand that these old experienced Bolsheviks did not accuse Stalin of treason against the ideals of Marxism, of Leninism, of the world revolution? No. Confessions of this kind are not free: they are prepared beforehand by the dictatorship.[127]

Steinberg also turned his attention to the general questions raised by Pritt about " increasing liberty " in the USSR.

> He will pardon me, but I can regard such words only as a grim jest. The New Constitution of Stalin is written in ink, but the death sentences mean blood and blood is stronger than ink.[128]

Steinberg, after pointing out that a new kind of " proletarian Caesarism " was being created in the USSR, ended by repeating the same powerful and moving plea of his last letter. " It is absolutely impossible to fight Fascism in Europe when behind the fighters stands Russia setting an example of State terrorism, although it be in the name of Communism."

The second reply to Pritt in this edition came from " YZ " who stressed that justice was impossible in a juridical system controlled by the GPU. In reply to Pritt's assertion that those suspects who did not confess were released when the evidence was scanty, he referred to

> hundreds of thousands of Socialists, Anarchists, Zionists and even of oppositional Communists who did not confess, were not released but were shot or sent to prison or into exile without any trial. This army of wrecked and shattered existences bears evidence against Mr Pritt.[129]

" YZ " also added that the 1931 Menshevik Trial, where Abramovitch proved that the charges were trumped up, should have taught Pritt caution. He concluded with an attack on Pritt's optimistic interpretation of the New Constitution:

> Hitler has shown how a dictatorial system may even be strengthened by a sham Constitution.[130]

A letter by Clifford Haworth also expressed grave doubt and uncertainty over the confessions, and requested more information on the methods used to break the defendants. He attacked the Soviet press for vilifying the accused during the trial thus creating an atmosphere unconducive to lack of bias. Finally, he pointed out that the Soviet Union was still one of the three European countries where Pritt would not be permitted to utter his views freely.[131]

Pritt replied on 12 February 1937 to Clifford Haworth, perhaps the mildest of his three critics. His entire letter assumed the guilt of the accused and he utilized many of the arguments that had been invalidated

[127] Thursday, 11 February 1937, p. 20.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.

by the correspondents attacking his previous letters. In reply to Haworth's queries as to the amount of lattitude allowed to Soviet police in examining suspected persons, Pritt was evasive but referred to the example of the Metro-Vickers Englishmen who

> have never complained of anything more than prolonged and searching cross-examination.[132]

He also pointed to Zinoviev and Kamenev, indicating that for a long time the preliminary examinations failed to extract full confessions from them:

> they succeeded to the end, apparently, in concealing their knowledge of the second or parallel centre which was established in the recent trial.[133]

Pritt's next two statements are worth quoting for they were to elicit furious rejoinders. On the subject of the extraction of confessions, Pritt referred to his personal experiences:

> The only personal knowledge I can contribute is that I have occasionally seen examinations going on when I have visited prisons and could see nothing wrong, and that I have met some of the investigators and found them to be men of very good type.[134]

In reply to Haworth's complaints about the vilification of the prisoners by the Soviet press, Pritt wrote sanctimoniously:

> He does not like this, and I do not either. All I can say is that the whole conception of restraining the press from such activities is utterly unknown in the majority of countries and that evil effects are at any rate much less likely with professional judges than with juries.[135]

After this amazing statement Pritt once again concluded that freedom was increasing in the Soviet Union.

THE same edition of the *Manchester Guardian* contained another letter by L. Sedoff. Sedoff was one of the first correspondents systematically to analyse the confessions of the accused, in order to discredit the court proceedings:

> In his final speech in the second Moscow trial, Radek put a bold question: What was the evidence on which the prosecution was based? And he replied that the evidence consisted solely of his own and Piatakoff's confessions since " the depositions of all the other defendants rest on our depositions."[136]

Sedoff agreed with Radek that there were no other facts to incriminate the accused; he then proceeded to examine other crucial statements of Radek and Piatakov disproving their alleged communications with Trotsky and himself.

[132] Friday, 12 February 1937, p. 22.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.

Sedoff's interpretations of the confessions are well worth examining. In his analysis Sedoff combined an intimate understanding of Bolshevik psychology with a sound historical approach. He wrote that the defendant's attitude

> must be considered in connection with the historical and political circumstances, the psychology of executioners and their victims, and the poisoned moral atmosphere of the country. Stalin has been ten years preparing these trials. Every free thought has been supressed, every independent character broken. It is ten years since Stalin first extracted confessions and self-denunciations from his present victims, the former oppositionists. Long before the trials they were morally broken, reduced to wretched shadows of their heroic period. If there were any truth in the charges, how could the alleged mortal enemies of Stalin exhibit such repentance?[137]

On Tuesday, 16 February 1937, John Paton, a Labour Party activist and author of *Left Turn*, wrote to the *Manchester Guardian*. Paton listed some of the crucial Soviet mistakes in the previous trials: Abramovitch was supposed to have been in Russia in 1928 at the very moment when he was addressing the Congress of the Labour and Socialist International at Brussels; the blunder in the Zinoviev trial when Holtzman confessed to meeting Sedoff in the lounge of the non-existent Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen in 1932; the claim by Piatakov, in the most recent trial, to have gone to Oslo by plane to conspire with Trotsky during a month in which the official records of the Oslo airport show no such journey was made. The alleged meeting between Trotsky and Romm in Paris was also strongly questioned. For Paton each of these blunders was important in undermining the case against Trotsky. With his personal knowledge of Trotsky's views and activities he also found it impossible to believe in his guilt.[138]

In the same issue Pat Sloan attacked the letter by Steinberg published on 11 February 1937. In response to Steinberg's queries as to why none of the condemned men on trial made a political speech attacking the Soviet government, Sloan asked: " What could they say?"[139] Sloan believed that the Russian people enthusiastically supported the Soviet regime and that the accused, realizing their isolation, could see no point in making final speeches to attempt to defy the government. Sloan concluded his letter by challenging Sedoff. He observed that in Copenhagen there existed a Café Bristol in the Grand Hotel which any foreigner might describe as the Hotel Bristol. Finally, Sloan stressed that he did not choose to believe in alibis provided by Trotsky, his relatives or bodyguard.

The debate on the veracity of the evidence continued. On 17 February Erwin Wolf wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* analysing Norwegian sources in detail to prove that the Piatakov-Trotsky meeting at Oslo was

[137] Ibid.
[138] Tuesday, 16 February 1937, p. 20.
[139] Ibid.

impossible. He also issued a direct challenge to the defenders of the Moscow Trials:

> Messrs. Pritt and Dudley Collard do not raise their voices for an international commission. Mr Pritt earnestly devoted himself to an examination, detail by detail, of the Reichstag Fire Trial; why should he not now grasp with pleasure the opportunity to bring to light the truth before a similar international tribunal? Now that Trotsky has declared that he will accept the moral judgement of such a tribunal, it is the moral duty of Messrs. Pritt and Collard to support his demand.[140]

In the same issue there was a letter entitled " The System of Interrogation " by " Sceptic." " Sceptic " thoroughly demolished Pritt's views, systematically destroying the arguments that Pritt utilized in his reply to Haworth. In reference to Pritt's assertion that he visited Moscow prisons, " Sceptic " asked:

> What Moscow prisons did Mr Pritt visit and what class of prisoners did he see interrogated? Were they political prisoners in the Lubyanka, and were they prisoners who have figured in recent important political trials? If they were not, then Mr Pritt's evidence on this point is not of much value. Visitors to Moscow are frequently shown one of the model prisons, but I have yet to hear of any being shown the Lubyanka.[141]

In relation to Pritt's rather rash assertion that the Metro-Vickers engineers " have never complained of anything more than prolonged searching examination," " Sceptic " quoted extensively from the memoirs of Alan Monkhouse to reveal that Soviet pressures on the engineers were somewhat less gentle than Pritt appeared to believe. Monkhouse described prolonged and extensive examinations resulting in complete mental exhaustion; " Sceptic " stressed that Zinoviev and Kamenev, in the hands of the GPU for months, would have been subjected to far greater pressures. " Sceptic " was not surprised that they confessed in instalments, granted the methods of interrogation:

> And Mr Pritt asks us to believe, too, that Zinovieff did not confess enough, although, from his behaviour at the trial, he was prepared to admit anything and everything. Is it not far more likely that he did not confess to knowledge of the " Parallel Centre " simply because he was unaware of its existence and had not been asked to do so by the OGPU?[142]

Pritt's views on the Soviet press were also subjected to thoroughgoing criticism. Pritt had expressed his distaste for the vilification of the prisoners in the Soviet press but qualified this by asserting that " the whole conception of restraining the press is utterly unknown in the majority of countries." " Sceptic's " reply acidly drew Pritt's attention to realities in the Soviet press:

[140] Wednesday, 17 February 1937, p. 18.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.

> If Mr Pritt has read *Izvestia* and *Pravda* during and after the trial he will have seen that, far from merely not restraining the press, the Soviet Government has used it as part of a State-directed propaganda which for sheer ferocity has hardly been paralleled in any other country. The Russian press has deliberately distorted what the outside world has had to say about the trial. While extensive quotations from Mr Pritt have been published, the damaging replies to him have been deliberately suppressed.[143]

On Saturday, 27 March 1937, the *Manchester Guardian* published a letter from " A Communist in Exile " denouncing the press campaign in Moscow against Bukharin. After Radek's implication of Bukharin in the second Treason Trial, the Soviet press had begun to stress Bukharin's disagreements with Lenin in 1915 and 1918 clearly as a preliminary to his appearance in another Treason Trial. This letter presented nothing new in the interpretation of the Purges but the immense bitterness of the author was apparent in every line:

> Bukharin is an old Bolshevik, therefore he is to be tried for his life. His chief offence seems to be that he debated on theory with Lenin " already in 1915." It is obvious that the prosecutors never did that, first, because they were then in opposite political camps, and secondly, because theory was uninteresting to them and debate not their strong point; for in a debate one has to say something of one's own and not to execute orders . . . It certainly never occurred to Lenin to accuse Bukharin of a " crime " because he thought his political theory was wrong . . . Twenty-two years later the Nationalist Vyshinsky discovers the " crime " of the old Bolshevik Bukharin, and it is possible that he will use it as an argument at his trial.[144]

ON Monday, 5 April 1937, the *Manchester Guardian* carried a long letter by Leon Trotsky. Trotsky emphasized that the Piatakov-Radek trial was definitely an organizational improvement on its predecessor but in spite of this he still observed many defects; the prosecutor had been a political enemy of the accused, a series of important witnesses had not been introduced into the court proceedings and much of the evidence was still inconsistent and unverifiable. Trotsky stressed that these considerations pertained to the form of the trial, but it was the essence that primarily interested him. Even if the form of the frame-up was perfect there was still much to criticize about the essence:

> Under an uncontrolled and despotic regime which concentrates in the same hands all the means of economic, political, physical and moral coercion, a judicial trial ceases to be a judicial trial. It is a judicial play, with the roles written in advance. The accused appear on the scene only after a series of rehearsals which give to the directors the advance assurance that they will not overstep the limits of their roles.[145]

[143] Ibid.
[144] Saturday, 27 March 1936, p. 22.
[145] Monday, 5 April 1937, p. 18.

Trotsky believed that the judicial trials only represented a coagulation of the whole general political regime of the USSR and that the trial was a particular example of the general Soviet pattern under Stalin:

> Following the movement of the orchestra's leader's baton, the historians, the economists, even the statisticians rearrange the past and the present without any regard for the facts, documents or the preceding editions of their own books. In the kindergartens and schools all the children in one and the same words glorify Vyshinsky and curse the accused. No one acts this way of his own volition, everyone violates his own will. The monolithic character of the judicial trial, in which the accused try to outdo each other in repeating the formulae of the prosecutor, is thus an exception to the rule but only the most repugnant expression of the totalitarian inquisitional regime. It is not a court before our eyes but a drama in which the actors play their roles in front of a revolver barrel. The play can be performed well or badly; but it is a question of the inquisitional technique and not of justice.[146]

On Tuesday, 13 April 1937, the *Manchester Guardian* published a letter from A. Maslow who had been a prominent leader of the Left wing of the German Communist Party until his expulsion in 1926. Maslow also had first-hand experience of Soviet conditions and clashed with the Stalinists in the Comintern. In spite of his knowledge and personal experience, his interpretations of the Purges were influenced by an overpowering desire to see the collapse of the Stalinist regime in Russia. Referring to a speech of Stalin's on 3 March, where Stalin had stressed the need for increased vigilance in the Soviet Union against the Trotskyist and class enemies, he wrote:

> If this speech is not the speech of a bankrupt commander who has become mad with panic, it is the despairing speech of a man who has been driven into a hopeless position and makes a last desperate feint.[147]

The arrest of Yagoda, ex-chief of the GPU, was also interpreted as a threat to Stalin's position; Maslow apparently envisaged a struggle for power involving a number of different factions, with Stalin becoming more isolated than ever.

Maslow sent the *Manchester Guardian* another letter a month later, discussing the dismissal of the Red Army general, Tukhachevsky. Maslow saw the implication of Tukhachevsky by Radek as a preliminary to an important regrouping around Stalin. Maslow conceded that Stalin had, for the moment, gained the upper hand and defeated his opponents in the army but he was still far from optimistic about the prospect for survival of the Stalinist regime. After indicating that Stalin's victory was Pyrrhic since a purge of the Red Army could only harm the security of the Soviet Union, Maslow concluded with a lengthy analysis justifying his view that Stalin's success was by no means permanent:

[146] Ibid.
[147] Tuesday, 13 April 1937, p. 22.

> Radek has perhaps been spared in order to appear in Tukhachevsky's Trial. Assuming, that is to say, that Stalin's momentary supremacy lasts. But will it? Such processes as the vacillation in home policy and the struggle over foreign policy—this latter is far from ended—are not entered in by a man in a strong position and with a steady political course. Stalin especially, does not enter upon them unless he is in greater personal danger than is evident abroad. Each one of these temporary " victories " ruins the prestige of the whole country, of its leadership, and so of Stalin himself, even if or the moment that he has won the day. And they necessitate further steps over which Stalin will no longer have control.[148]

Maslow clearly believed that the Purges were to escalate in a way that would threaten Stalin's own position.

ONE of the most perceptive sets of interpretations of the Purges was published in the *Manchester Guardian* in mid-August in a two-part article entitled " Russia Under Stalin." The author was described as " a correspondent who had just left the Soviet Union after many years of residence in Moscow." In the first issue of his article he outlined the struggle for power and the formulation of Stalin's dictatorship. He began by pointing out that no one familiar with the developments of recent years in Moscow could have been surprised by the arrests and trials eliminating the old Bolsheviks. In contrasting the dictatorship of Lenin with that of Stalin he wrote:

> In Lenin's time the dictatorship did not press uniformly on all strata of the population.[149]

Whilst this was true, it is surprising that the correspondent saw the middle class, the non-socialist intelligentsia and the old Tsarist bureaucracy as Lenin's chief victims. The author linked Stalin's success with the elimination of remaining freedoms outside the Party and the complete destruction of inner-party democracy. He associated the GPU with Stalin's rise to power but pointed out that Stalin very skilfully managed to dissociate himself from the GPU and play off the army against it. Yagoda's dismissal was interpreted as an indication that the Purges were to continue. This conclusion was preceded by his drawing a sharp contrast between Yagoda and his successor, Yezhov.

> Yagoda was violent in method, megalomanic, an emulation of the men of the Renaissance: his successor is fanatical, ascetic, devoutly subservient to Stalin, determined to remove all obstacles that stand between Stalin and the masses. So we shall continue for months to witness the violent reconstruction of the Soviet dictatorship, the removal of all who are not simple technical instruments, simple functionaries of Stalin's will, all who have been politically minded. The human material of the great Soviet Union is to be converted into an immense machine for the carrying out of the will of Stalin.[150]

[148] Monday, 17 May 1937, p. 16.
[149] Wednesday, 18 August 1937, pp. 9–10.
[150] Ibid.

The second part of the article appeared the next day and gave the readers of the *Manchester Guardian* an extremely penetrating analysis of the trials. In his explanation of the confessions the author stressed the complete isolation of the prisoners and the totality of state pressure.[151] He also explained that " no trial takes place in public unless it is known in advance that it can be staged without a hitch."[152] Only a fraction of the trials are held in public, and for each one that is, only a few defendants or witnesses out of scores are selected to appear in court: those who it is felt can be relied upon after months of preliminary investigation. The author noted the absence in the Radek-Piatakov trial, of Rakovsky, a Bulgarian " well known for his obstinate firmness of character."

Even at this stage the author had illuminated aspects of the Purges that very few other analysts or correspondents had noted. Yet, like Trotsky, he rightly indicated that stage management could not in itself provide the full explanation for the behaviour of such men as Zinoviev and Kamenev, Radek and Piatakov, in court. Unlike Trotsky, however, he analysed the Bolshevik mentality to provide the answers. First he posed the question: " How could they attack the regime?":

> They never condemned the principle of dictatorship. Zinovieff and Kameneff themselves expressed approval of hundreds of terrorist death sentences; Radek had publically written in support of them.[153]

Thus, after indicating that the old Bolsheviks had helped to create and form the state machinery that was now persecuting them, the author proceeded to examine their personal motives for confessing. His explanations were intelligent and his description of their spiritual predicament implied a subtle awareness of their personalities and familiarity with their courtroom testimonies:

> To stand their ground would be to ask for the death sentence. If they want to have the slightest chance of escaping the worst, they must declare and demonstrate their penitence and must abase themselves in order to make their penitence seem real. The nervous tension is dreadful and it is not easy to preserve due proportion. Some disclose everything they know; others with hatred of the Stalin regime in their hearts, lift only a corner of the veil, tell something in order to prove their repentance, hope that they will convey a warning to the conspirators still at large, and soothe their consciences with the sense of having done so much, and so little. They may feel, too, that they will be kept alive in the hope of getting out of them.[154]

This is one of the most intelligent descriptions of the behaviour of the accused yet presented in the *Manchester Guardian*. Up to this stage the author had been concerned with the " tactics of survival," next he broadened his scope:

> Moreover the recent trials have been of Old Bolsheviks, brought up

[151] Thursday, 19 August 1937, pp. 9–10.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.

> from youth in the Bolshevik outlook. The worst possible charge for them is that of treachery to the Party and to the Revolution. They know that the whole case can have put upon it whatever complexion suits the regime and they try at least to leave behind them a reputable record to go down in history.[155]

The speech that Bukharin made in his final plea in March 1938 substantially corroborated this interpretation.

A strong reaction to these articles came from J. Frankenburg, Honorary Secretary for the Manchester Branch of the Society for Cultural Relations between Britain and the USSR. Frankenburg stressed the importance of maternity and child-welfare institutions and referred to Mr Huntley Carter who had written of a cultural renaissance in Russia. He concluded his letter with the assertion that either Huntley Carter or the author of " Russia Under Stalin " must be wrong because they had opposite views.[156] It is interesting that an editorial defence of " Russia Under Stalin " was published directly underneath Frankenburg's letter:

> The article our correspondent criticises dealt, from personal observation, with the terrorist methods of the Stalin regime. That the Soviet Government may also promote child welfare, housing and the arts is quite irrelevant. Italian culture flourished under the Borgias; great Spanish art was not incompatible with the Inquisition. But no one attempts to deny the existence of one because of the presence of the other.[157]

In November, the month of the 20th anniversary of the Bolshevik seizure of power, Steinberg sent the *Manchester Guardian* another letter entitled " Socialist Prisoners in Russia. Living a Life Without Hope." Here he drew attention to the tragic fate of those

> Socialists who took a direct part in the October Revolution, helped to create the Soviet regime in whose jails they now live a life without hope.[158]

Steinberg specifically referred to some of the prominent Left Social Revolutionaries pointing out that 20 years ago they had stood on the same side of the barricades as Lenin and Trotsky, only to rebel when they realized that the Bolsheviks were to destroy their dreams of a new society by the creation of a narrow-minded, fanatical one-party state, unable to reign except by the use of terror. Steinberg concluded with the sad question:

> But can the public opinion of the world remain silent at the sight of a revolutionary State celebrating its triumph whilst its prisons are crammed with its own prisoners?[159]

[155] Ibid.
[156] Friday, 27 August 1937, p. 18.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Friday, 3 November 1937, p. 22.
[159] Ibid.

The problem of the Left Social Revolutionaries was to spark off a new debate in the *Manchester Guardian*.[160]

On Friday, 26 November 1937, another correspondent styled "A Student of the Russian Press" joined in the controversy over political prisoners in the Soviet Union. He stressed that the treatment of political prisoners was now far more severe than it ever had been under the Tsars and he also drew attention to the tremendous extent of the Purges:

> What is going on now is a ruthless extermination of all the revolutionary spirit, of all independent opinion. It is a dreadful removal of prominent men and women, a stamping out of exceptional individuals, a killing of personalities. Its purpose is to exterminate all potential opposition . . . The British public does not realise how far this persecution actually goes.[161]

The "Student of the Russian Press" elicited two replies on Tuesday, 30 November 1937. The first, by Henry F. Metcalf, defended Stalin in the light of the terrible past of Tsarist Russia and argued that given time, conditions in the Soviet Union would improve.[162] The second, by Huntley Carter, put forward much the same point of view. He claimed that the massacre of the workers under the Tsar had no parallel.[163]

IN December the *Manchester Guardian* printed two articles comparing the regimes in Germany and Russia. In his first article, the correspondent referred to Stalin's direct contribution to the rise of Hitler. The communists had interpreted fascism as the last stage of capitalism, and the correspondent emphasized that Stalin believed that Germany could not be Bolshevized until after the Nazis had seized power. Moreover, Hitler fulfilled a useful function for the communists by destroying the Social Democrat and Catholic Trade Unions.[164] The second part of the article published the next day was concerned with describing Nazi-Soviet relations after Hitler's accession to power. Whilst the Soviets may have believed that Nazism in Germany constituted an intermediate stage to the proletarian revolution, they did recognize Hitler's ambitions as a threat to the security of the Soviet Union. In spite of this, the correspondent indicated that Russia still retained some links with Nazi Germany. One example of this is the fact that German correspondents in Russia were able to abuse the Soviet Union in a manner that no other foreign correspondents dared. The author also stressed that both regimes needed the other for propaganda purposes:

> Hitler needs the Bolshevik bogey more than ever, whilst the Soviet Union cannot make a public gesture of friendship to Germany with its internal struggle still continuing. The various oppositions have been denounced as tools of National Socialism, and what would be

[160] Gore Graham replied to Steinberg on 9 November 1937 and this provoked a retort by Steinberg on 15 November, to be followed by another letter from Gore Graham on 20 November.
[161] Friday, 26 November 1927, p. 20.
[162] Tuesday, 30 November 1937, p. 22.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Friday, 3 December 1937, pp. 11–12.

> said if in the midst of its arrests and shootings the Government were to do the very thing for which the oppositionists are being shot.[165]

However, the correspondent noted that the public has a short memory and ended on a note of prophetic foreboding:

> Sooner or later the two dictatorships may return to diplomatic friendship, as a tactical manoeuvre; they will argue that after all, their task is to pursue practical politics . . . For the Russians a period of friendship might give time for the ripening of the revolutionary situation in Germany; for the Third Reich it might give a free hand elsewhere.[166]

On 14 December 1937 the " Student of the Russian Press " wrote a very intelligent reply to the critics of his previous letters. He stated that he did not blame the Bolsheviks for their actions during the Civil War but condemned the persecution of their political opposition in peaceful times. He ironically pointed out that

> it is a weak plea for a regime which claims to be " the best and most advanced democracy in the world " that the treatment of the Opposition today is not worse than what it was under the Tsars.[167]

Furthermore, the author maintained that terror under the Tsar could not be compared with the arrests of hundreds for the murder of Kirov; in Tsarist days some of the liberal and socialist papers managed to avoid censorship, an impossibility under Stalin. Finally, the " Student of the Russian Press " emphasized that the Socialists, Liberals and Social Revolutionaries in jail today had been the delegates representing the majority of the Russian people in the only free elections held over 20 years before.

On 22 December 1937 the *Manchester Guardian* published a report of an interview between the Paris correspondent and Mr Alexander Barmin, former First Secretary of the Soviet Legation in Athens, who had sought asylum in France. Barmin described himself as belonging to the " real revolutionary generation." He had fought in the Civil War, helped in the implementation of the five-year plans, but had become uneasy during his last visit to Moscow at the time of the Zinoviev and Piatakov trials. He was profoundly shocked by the purge of the Red Army generals a few months later. Barmin suspected a trap when he was suddenly invited to return to the Soviet Union; he left for France instead, convinced that the attempt to get rid of him was part of a vast system:

> All these people who are being dismissed, deported and shot could not possibly have taken part in Stalin's counter-revolution. The socialist revolution is to-day merely a piece of window dressing, largely kept up for the benefit of foreign countries.[168]

He continued with a bitter attack on Stalin, pointing out that Stalin had

[165] Saturday, 4 December 1937, pp. 11–12.
[166] Ibid.
[167] Tuesday, 14 December 1937, p. 20.
[168] Wednesday, 22 December 1937, p. 13.

the mentality of a renegade who pretended to carry out the revolution in order to get rid of the real revolutionaries. Barmin's views on the impact of the Purges on the Russian people are summarized by the Paris correspondent:

> While the older generation of people, particularly the working class are finding these accusations against the revolutionaries difficult or impossible to believe—in spite of the " confessions "—the younger people of eighteen or twenty are " ready to believe anything."[169]

IN January 1938 another anonymous correspondent sent a long article to the *Manchester Guardian* entitled " The Russian Enigma." The first part of the article consisted of a discussion of the role of terror in the Soviet Union since the Bolshevik accession to power in 1917. The correspondent believed that after 1928 terror became an instrument of control used against opposition in the Party itself, although until the advent of the Purges, the communist oppositionists were imprisoned and not shot. The author pointed to one very interesting contrast between the first trial of August 1936 and the second of January 1937: the accused who featured in the first trial had been deprived of their high positions years before they were brought to court and shot, whilst the victims of the second trial held their official posts right up to the time of their arrest. The author then referred to the tremendous extent of the Purges. He believed that thousands of officials had been shot and hundreds of thousands arrested. In his list of prominent officials arrested were featured leaders from the Commissariats of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Interior Armament, Heavy Industry, Finance, Agriculture, Light Industry and Internal Trade. He also provided another impressive list of casualties from the heads of the various republics of the Soviet Union. The author did not believe that this process was a mere substitution of new men for old. This would not have necessitated such drastic, devastating measures:

> After what has been said there can be no doubt that it was a profound and fundamental social regrouping.[170]

The second part of the article which appeared a week later developed these ideas, by emphasizing that Stalin was determined to base his dictatorial power on a new class:

> The overwhelming majority of this upper stratum are men and women who have grown up since the Revolution, who are now making their way, and for whom Stalin's words about " those who thirst for advancement " were like the words of a saviour. The younger men and women, who have succeeded in life see " the victory of the Revolution " in this personal success of theirs and in their own often very rapid advancement: the economic and social needs of the working population are of no interest to them. Stalin has resolved to base his power on this new generation of optimistic

[169] Ibid.
[170] Monday, 24 January 1938, pp. 9–10.

> individuals and to adjust the whole political system and also the official stock of ideas to this end.[171]

The rise of this new class coupled with Stalin's lust for power resulted in the Purges. The author emphasized that Stalin's method of consolidating his power was to restock all positions occupied by the Civil War generation with new cadres educated under Stalin:

> In order to achieve this " renovation " of personnel as quickly as possible and to break all opposition to it, the old cadres of the party, belonging to the heroic days of the party activities before the revolution must be extirpated.[172]

Finally the author, in an extremely perceptive passage, placed the Treason Trials and extermination of the leading old Bolsheviks within the whole framework of Stalin's desire to create power for the new generation. Writing of the Old Guard, the author stated:

> They must not only be physically annihilated but morally and politically discredited, represented as enemies of the people and of the working class, careerists, venal wretches, spies and " mad dogs."[173]

The third Treason Trial which featured Bukharin, Yagoda and Rykov received its share of editorial attention but did not elicit the same flood of letters as the first two trials. There was no prolonged debate in the columns of " Letters to the Editor." The most interesting correspondent was Charles Rappoport who had only recently officially resigned from the French Communist Party and renounced his post as Paris correspondent for *Izvestia*. Rappoport was on intimate terms with many of the accused in the third Treason Trial and found it impossible to believe in their guilt. After indicating that in the whole of Russia only Stalin was free to " speak aloud and without restraint," he commented bitterly on the confessions:

> And even the Byzantine emperors who put out the eyes of possible rivals and the sultans who threw their brothers into the Bosphorous did not first make them confess to abominable crimes and dishonour themselves before all posterity.[174]

Somewhat belatedly, considering the date of his departure from the Party, Rappoport concluded:

> Stalin may take pride in having demonstrated to the world that Socialism without liberty leads to the most despicable tyranny, ruining and degrading a great country.[175]

ONE of the most striking characteristics of the *Manchester Guardian* in its coverage of the Purges was the contrast between the image of them in the editorials and their image in the columns of " Letters to the

[171] Monday, 31 January 1938, pp. 9–10.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Thursday, 31 March 1938, p. 20.
[175] Ibid.

Editor." Whilst the editorials were clear and lucid they also had a tendency to somewhat over-simplify certain aspects of the terror. However, the moral stand taken by the editorials on important issues was unequivocal. The first editorial on the Purges, that of Tuesday, 25 August 1936, essentially consisted of a strong plea to spare the lives of the accused. The editorial on the second great Show Trial, Saturday, 23 January 1937, was more sophisticated. It contained no plea for mercy towards the accused, the court proceedings were thoroughly condemned and it even attacked the Soviet press for contempt of court. By 6 April 1937 the titles of the editorials had become bitter. " Darkest Russia " was one example. This hostility took on a sarcastic tone in such editorials as " Calling All Ghosts " and " Malice Around the Mulberry Bush." In the Tuesday editorial of 8 February 1938, entitled " Heartless Bureaucracy," the bitterness at the somewhat belated attempts of the Soviet authorities to slow down, and to dissociate themselves from the Purges, was overwhelmingly apparent. The last editorial to appear on the trials, on 4 March 1938, stated " there are still some who manage to believe in Soviet justice: there can be none who believe in Soviet mercy."

Moral revulsion at the Purges implied doubt with regard to the genuineness of the charges. The editorials, by the use of constant irony, indicated that many of the charges were frame-ups. For example, the editor in discussing the arrest of Yagoda in " Darkest Russia " found it difficult to believe that a man who had arrested so many Trotskyists could have been working in collusion with them. Many of the editorials also expressed surprise that out of the entire Bolshevik Old Guard, Stalin alone was the only one to have survived charges of treachery, criminality and corruption. The editorial of Friday, 11 June 1937 entitled " The Manifold Purge " broadened the scope of the *Guardian's* criticism of the Purges by saying that Stalin, by using such terms as " Trotskyist " and " wrecker," simultaneously indicted and eliminated three distinct groups: the old Bolsheviks, the industrial managers and the Red Army leaders. The third great Show Trial produced two editorials, on 3 March and 14 March 1938, where the editor took the view that the trials served as propaganda to show the Russian people that anyone who opposed the government was a traitor. The main theme now of the *Guardian's* editorial comment was Stalin's consolidation of power.

The image of the Purges in the columns of " Letters to the Editor " was naturally far more complicated. The sharpness of the debate stimulated increasingly more sophisticated interpretations. D. N. Pritt, Pat Sloan and " The Friends of the Soviet Union " all supported the Stalinist version of the Purges. Their opinions provoked Theodore Dan, " JKB," Anton Ciliga, Solomon Schwarz, Steinberg, L. Sedoff, Leon Trotsky, A. Maslow, " YZ " the " Former Member of the Comintern," A. Barmin, Charles Rappoport and the author of " Russia Under Stalin," writers who for the most part were ex-Bolsheviks or members of revolutionary groups that had been closely associated with the Bolsheviks before 1917. Whilst the editorials only partially drew on the reports of the Moscow

Correspondent, the political letter writers had a far broader framework of reference, that is to say, their personal experiences and familiarity with Bolshevik psychology. Another significant factor in the columns of " Letters to the Editor " was that both sides in the controversy appealed to the importance of the fight against fascism; both sides suggested that their opponents' interpretations of the Purges weakened their ability to make a successful stand against the increasing menace of fascism.

Whilst the editorials expressed strong disapproval of the Soviet system, indicated some of the more outstanding contradictions of the Moscow Trials and attempted to investigate the scope and purpose of the Purges, there were many grave defects and omissions in the actual analysis. One problem the editorials completely failed to come to grips with was that of the confessions. Nearly all the editorials expressed complete mystification at this phenomenon. There was only one attempted explanation, provided in an article by the Moscow Correspondent analysing the behaviour of Krestinsky in the Moscow court. The *Press Association Foreign Special*, Reuter's and the paper's own Moscow Correspondent all sent in reports of the speeches of the defendants and prosecutor. The authors of many of the letters interpreted these speeches and it is somewhat surprising that the editorials should have failed to utilize this wealth of material. The failure to examine subtle differences between compliance and resistance in the speeches of the accused is a symptom of the failure of most British analysts to comprehend the Bolshevik ethic and mentality. This basic lack of contact between two worlds, the continual tendency of the British to translate Soviet developments into English terms, can be illustrated by directly referring to some of the material in the editorials.

In at least two editorials, Monday, 1 February 1937 and Saturday, 11 December 1937, the view that the Purges revealed the existence of widespread opposition to the Stalin regime was put forward. From this observation it was inferred that the Soviet Union was backward because it lacked a two-party system. If the oppositionists were traitors this was only because there was no alternative party to enable them to express their views openly and legitimately. This view, in contrast to many of the letters, entirely failed to take account of Lenin's theory of the revolutionary élite, the forging of the Bolshevik party into a monolithic unity and the nature of the faction fighting and recantations in the 1920s.

Another defect in the editorials was the grave underestimation of the extent of the Purges. The editorials concentrated on the elimination of the old Bolsheviks, the Red Army and the industrial managers: the Moscow Correspondent reported the Purges in the far-away Republics of the Soviets, and the arrest of German and Polish communist refugees, but at no stage was there mention of the elimination of an entire revolutionary generation. This generation consisted of far more than the Party élite. It included many who fought in the Civil War and also, as the Purges escalated, many who were entirely outside the ranks of the Party. Most memoirs of the period indicate an oppressive atmosphere of fear

extending throughout the Soviet Union. Yet on two occasions, Friday, 11 June 1937 and Friday, 21 January 1938, the editorials implied that the common people and the " average man " were unaffected by the Purges and in fact derived pleasure from seeing the mighty humbled!

The " Letters to the Editor " compensated for many of the defects in the editorials, despite the fact that the editorials of the *Manchester Guardian* proved far more intelligent and sophisticated than those of other British newspapers. Yet it is interesting to note that letters written by those closely acquainted with the Soviet scene could also have their defects. For example Steinberg, A. Maslow and the " Former Member of the Comintern " all appeared to believe that Stalin, after having escalated the Purges too far, found himself in a precarious position. This view can partly be accounted for by the paucity of evidence at the disposal of Kremlinologists for determining the balance of power during the Purges, but it also reflects the desires and hopes of old and bitter opponents of Stalin.

Most of the other writers realized that Stalin was in complete control, and like the editorials, stressed his lust for power. However, views expressed in letters by the " Student of the Russian Press," by " A Communist in Exile," by A. Barmin and especially by the author of the " Russian Enigma " were more perceptive than those of the editor; these correspondents realized that Stalin was liquidating a revolutionary generation and creating a new class, a class of specially trained cadres rigidly loyal and subservient to him, a class that had not experienced the revolution or fought in the Civil War.

THEORIES on the emergence of a new class and increasing bureaucratization reveal a sound understanding of Soviet history. This was certainly apparent in many of the letters where the correspondents endeavoured to place the Purges within a historical framework. " JKB " for example, saw the beginning of the counter-revolution in Russia in the late 1920s and Anton Ciliga viewed the Purges as the third act of a struggle beginning with the process of collectivization and industrialization in the late 1920s. Trotsky and Sedoff naturally emphasized the importance of the faction fighting after Lenin's death when Stalin gained control of the bureaucratic apparatus of the Party. Alexander Barmin and Charles Rappoport were recent defectors influenced by the events of the Purges themselves. Finally, Theodore Dan and Steinberg represented the early Menshevik and Left Social Revolutionary critics of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, both before and immediately after the revolution. All alike stressed the evolution of terror in the Soviet Union.

The confessions themselves received special attention and were often skilfully interpreted. In his first letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, Sedoff asserted that the accused were worn down after long and protracted examinations, promised their lives and then double-crossed. Trotsky in his famous cable to the *Manchester Guardian* asked for an explanation of why the whole Bolshevik Old Guard with the exception of Stalin became

criminals and then willingly confessed. Shortly afterwards A. J. P. Taylor posed " the paradox of guilt." He found the confessions far more difficult to understand if the accused were guilty than if they were innocent. Sedoff in his second letter held that the majority of old Bolsheviks had been morally broken and in many cases recanted long before they appeared in court. Trotsky in a long letter interpreted the court confessions as part of a judicial play organized by Stalin in every part of the Soviet Union. In August 1937 the author of " Russia Under Stalin " provided the most systematic and coherent of the explanations of the Purges. The defencelessness of the victims in the face of the overwhelming power of the state was emphasized and he pointed out that only a few of the trials were held in public with the accused and witnesses carefully selected well before. Correctly he explained that the Bolshevik Old Guard never condemned the principle of dictatorship; he examined the confessions themselves to show a strange mixture of compliance and resistance, over-confession and understatement. Finally, he depicted some of the Bolsheviks as fighting for their lives in the court and others as confessing as a last service to the regime to which they had devoted their lives and which they had helped to create.

Among them, the editorials, the reports from the Moscow Correspondent, Reuter's, *Press Association Foreign Special*, and above all the " Letters to the Editor," presented a full picture of the Soviet Purges. The editorials were honest, the cables from abroad on the court scenes detailed, and the " Letters to the Editor " combined polemics with rich analysis.

Stalin: Genesis of a Myth*

Pierre du Bois

" The lie is the essence of Stalinism, in all its different forms, from the lie by omission to the lie by falsification."

Boris Souvarine

IN order to pick out the myth or the lie, one must have a certain idea of reality or truth. Is this an easy task in Stalin's case? This question turns on another: what kind of documentation on Stalin is available? In his case what emerges is the incomplete, uneven and unreliable nature of the documentation.

There are already problems with the dates of the documentation. The material on Stalin's childhood, adolescence and the years of revolutionary struggle are characterized by omissions and lack of conclusive evidence. In the introduction to the first volume of Stalin's *Complete Works*, the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute points out the disappearance of the archives of the committee of the Caucasian Union of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party, and of certain publications by Transcaucasian Bolshevik organizations, " in which Stalin's writings appeared."[1] When they have not vanished, other archives have been kept secret. The archives of the seminary where Stalin was a student from 1894 to 1899 *do* exist. But where? And in what condition? In their 1939 study of " the childhood and youth of a leader," V. Kaminsky and I. Vereshchagin cite them, but already in a style in keeping with the Stalinist myth.[2]

In a sense, the years of his rise (from 1917 to 1930) are better endowed. Although CPSU archives are not available to researchers, access to fragments of archives—those banned under Stalin—is possible, and these give direct or indirect information about him. There is also a mass of information passed on by those involved in, or who witnessed, struggles in Soviet Russia.

From the 1930s onwards, omissions in the documentation become gaping holes. No archives. Few or no really informative personal accounts of the time. Secrets of state—or of the head of state—ruled supreme at every level. In the Stalinist mind, contemporary history, or even simply history, consists not of facts and research but of ideological tasks.

* This article first appeared as " Mythe et Biographie: Le cas de Staline " in *Cadmos*, Printemps/Été, 1982.

[1] Joseph Stalin, *Oeuvres* Vol. 1 (Paris, 1953), p. 11.

[2] V. Kaminsky and I. Vereshchagin, " Detstvo i yunost' vozhdya: dokumenti, zapiski, rasskazi," in *Molodaya gvardiya*, 1939, No. 12. Cited by Edward Ellis Smith, *The Young Stalin. The Early Years of an Elusive Revolutionary* (New York, 1963), p. 13.

ALREADY limited by the gaps in source material, research on Stalin is further complicated by the doubts concerning some of the information that *is* available.[3] What credence should be given to the documents on Stalin's childhood and youth, or to those on the years of revolutionary struggle? Some accounts have been invented, others rewritten and altered. Quotations have been tampered with and correspondence falsified. The complete works—incomplete and reworked—have been adapted to conform to the interests of the communist leader. Certain writings have been falsely attributed to him. For instance, where does the article on " The National Question and Leninism," dated 1929 and brought out in Volume Two of the *Complete Works*,[4] come from, while a previous study by Stalin on the same theme—*Marxism and the National Question*, written in 1913, was published and republished until 1953?[5] The paucity of his writings in comparison with Lenin's is no doubt the explanation for the inclusion of dubious texts in The Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute edition. The *History of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the USSR*, prepared under the direction of a Central Committee Commission and published in 1939, was soon attributed to Stalin alone in similar conditions of authoritarian appropriation.[6]

The serious doubts that hover over the written documentation do not lift when it comes to the autobiographical confessions of the master of the Soviet Union. What value should be placed on the versions of his life story that he himself dictated, or on the confidences he let slip during the course of conversations? Disentangling the true from the false is ultimately a matter of pure conjecture. Apart from the fact that when Stalin told secrets to other people, it was usually a calculated move with personal interest in mind, thus making their value only relative, his confidences also frequently contradict one another, sometimes over elementary facts.[7]

Iconographical material also falls under suspicion. There are numerous photographs that have been retouched, mounted or cut. The oldest example is the photograph of Stalin and Lenin at Gorki in 1922—when the author of *The State and Revolution* was already suffering from arteriosclerosis—sitting side by side in a friendly way, as suggested by their smiling faces. Close inspection shows that the photograph is really two pictures superimposed.[8] Other famous documents have been revised and " corrected " in the same way—even newsreel tapes have been cut or altered.

[3] False information is not the prerogative of communists alone. Anti-communists have also made fabrications. A study published in Paris in 1927, *Les Faussaires contre les Soviets*, lists a certain number. Some studies on the Soviet Union, in particular on Stalin, are based on unreliable sources if not on plain lies. Memoirs have been invented left, right and centre. For instance, there are the memoirs of Stalin's " nephew," Budu Svanidze, or Maxim Litvinov's diary. And, as an even more recent example, what credit should be given to Khrushchev's memoirs?

[4] J. V. Stalin, " The National Question and Leninism," in *Complete Works*, Vol. II (Moscow, 1954), pp. 348–71.

[5] See N. Gradoboief, " Staline auteur," in *Preuves*, December 1951, pp. 13–14.

[6] See Waclaw Solski, " Le best-seller inconnu," in *Preuves*, December 1951, pp. 15–17.

[7] Bertram D. Wolfe, *Three Who Made a Revolution* (Dial Press, New York, 1948), p. 405.

[8] Boris Shub, " Les maquilleurs de l'histoire," in *Preuves*, October 1962.

Following the logic of the cult of personality that he commanded and directed, Stalin not only ordered documents to be fabricated, falsified and destroyed, but he also ordered the deliberate use and/or elimination of witnesses. Numerous former fellow-students or friends were forced to give " official " accounts of their experiences with Stalin, or were made to remain silent, through fear and as a result of the Purges. There is no place for common weakness and humanity in the management of a cult.[9] In the memoirs that appeared during the 1920s, but especially in those after 1930, the recounting of events and situations in which Iosif Vissarionovich was implicated were strictly adjusted according to propaganda requirements. To the extent that myth is substituted for history, the value of the documents lies only in the fact that they confirm and illustrate the dominant theses. This is more or less to say that the historian, to use Churchill's expression, is faced with a " riddle, wrapped up in a mystery inside an enigma."[10]

Nevertheless a certain amount of contradictory documentation about Stalin does exist. First of all there are the archives and memoirs of Leon Trotsky and Boris Nikolaevsky, and the stories of friends, colleagues and companions who had fallen out with Stalin either over political beliefs or over personal matters. There are also the accounts of Soviet citizens written after the dictator's death, especially after the relative de-Stalinization of 1956 to 1964, and in particular, there is Nikita Khrushchev's report to the 20th Congress of the CPSU, and the memoirs of Stalin's generals and marshals. There are also the few new documents incorporated into studies or collections, or appearing in various journals, on Lenin, the October Revolution, the Civil War or even the " Great Patriotic War." Therefore, in spite of everything, the researcher still has at his disposal the means to sift through the information and, to a certain extent, to decide what constitutes reality, what lie and what myth.

THE cult of Stalin was constructed on a myth that was both revealed and added to by authorized biographies, in so far as they told of an exemplary life spent in the service of an exemplary cause. This mythogenesis tends towards hagiography. The perfection and infallibility of the leader, the *vozhd'*, calls for the rewriting of history. From the moment when only ends matter, all scientific research is excluded from the means—in spite of the supposed scientific nature of Marxism. There are no positivist biographies. The cult demands the edification and mystification. The only appropriate events, character traits and ideas, are those that embellish the required image. In the Stalinist order, Stalinist truth prevails. In the text, history borders on mythology: events are recast, censored, invented, according to the myth's canvas, just as the actors who experienced them are praised, denigrated or eliminated. By the end of this rewriting, Lenin and Stalin alone are left facing this imaginary History. A new historical memory is born out of the ruins of the

[9] Bertram D. Wolfe, op. cit. p. 406.
[10] See William Henry Chamberlain, *The Russian Enigma. An Interpretation* (New York, 1944), p. 1.

old, completely reworked, restructured and recreated—in a word, Stalinized.

History—and in the first place Stalin's own history—is not only revised, but is given ideological form. Biography is only valuable and effective if it condenses the man and the ideology incarnate in him. In a sense, under the control of dialectical materialism raised to the status of a state ideology, it takes on a theological character. In other words, it becomes essentially hagiography. Personal and ideological prestige are confused. Stalin's " eschatological function "[11] determines the exemplary nature of his life. What counts is not only recognition of the " prodigious qualities of heroism or other exemplary traits belonging to the leader,"[12] but also recognition of the ideological orthodoxy that the leader both defends and illustrates. The glorification of Stalin to which all the authorized biographies tend makes reference to the Leninist " Table of Law " of which the " people's father " is somehow the keeper.

The cultivation of Stalinist biographies prolonged, as well as increased, what had begun in the early 1920s: the deification of Lenin before, but especially after his death[13] gave rise to an overabundant hagiographical literature, as witnessed by the dozens, even hundreds, of essays, narratives, studies, singing his praises in many different voices. Adulation began to form an intrinsic part of current discourse. " His closest followers set about lauding his real or imaginary superiority, with no place for criticism or doubts."[14] Other leaders aroused interest, curiosity, enthusiasm—or myths. Trotsky had already become a legendary—and literary—figure. Zinoviev kept up the myth of his historical Bolshevism. Even Lenin's successor to the presidency of the Council of People's Commissars, Alexei Rykov, was by 1924 the subject of two " great " authorized biographies. The literary mythocopoeia of the heroes of the October Revolution—or at least of some of them—evolved into a cultural rite, revealing the idolatrous tendencies of the Party. In a sense, the cult of the revolutionary hero which began to flourish under Lenin determined the structure of the cult of Stalin. When the " father of the revolution " died on 21 January 1924, each of his comrades-in-arms and colleagues tried to be more Leninist than the next. Stalin, Zinoviev, Radek, Bukharin, Trotsky, Molotov, Yaroslavsky all wrote hagiographical essays, memoirs and biographies. Superstition and servility reigned, " cunningly manipulated by his successors for their own profit."[15] The cult of Lenin, sustained by these hagiographical tributes, institutionalized the mythogenesis of the revolutionary leader.

[11] See Mircea Eliade, *Aspects du Mythe* (Paris, 1963), p. 213.

[12] Max Weber, *Le Savant et Le Politique* (Paris, 1959), p. 102.

[13] Published in 1918 under the name of *Kratkaya biografiya*, the first biography of Lenin seems to have had an essentially utilitarian character. The first eulogy appeared in 1920, on the occasion of his 50th birthday.

[14] Boris Souvarine, " Le culte de Lénine " in *Le Contrat Social*, January 1960, p. 2.

[15] Ibid.

THE first authorized biography of Stalin appeared in 1927, written under the name of Ivan Tovstukha, personal secretary to the Bolshevik leader. It was first published in Volume 41 of the *Encyclopaedia Granat* and then as a brochure.[16] Initiated and supervised by the Party Secretary himself,[17] it sums up in the form of a detailed *curriculum vitae*, the self-image that Stalin wanted to present both inside and outside the Party. As Jean-Jacques Marie noted, " it was one of the first steps in the delicate elaboration of his legend."[18] Commissioned by the *Encyclopaedia Granat* and then as a brochure.[16] Initiated and supervised by the Revolution, it brings out, or contrives to bring out, the Georgian from under a certain shadow that contrasted him unfavourably with the reputation, or even the prestige, of his immediate rivals. While it follows the rigid, even colourless format of a dictionary entry, already it is transforming reality into myth.

Concealment, invention, exaggeration characterize the description, " without however giving a radically false portrait of Stalin."[19] What seems to be important is the affirmation of the Party General Secretary's revolutionary legitimacy. These initial concerns decided what information should be provided. The axis on which the whole *curriculum* turns is the " historical " Leninism of the *gensek*, first shown by his recognition—under the revolutionary Kurnatovsky's influence—of Lenin's role, then by his becoming a Bolshevik in 1903, followed by the constant support given to the exiled leader in his struggle against the Mensheviks and other " anti-proletarian elements," and finally by his friendship and close collaboration with Lenin from 1917 onwards. " Stalin always remained Lenin's closest colleague and supporter."[20] Other virtues are added to these protestations of Leninism—the precocious nature of Stalin's revolutionary commitment; his militancy and heroism, as illustrated by the arrests, condemnations, imprisonments and escapes; his strategic talents displayed during the course of the Civil War and recognized by the award of the Order of the Red Flag; and his theoretical writings, especially *Marxism and the National Question*, which Tovstukha mentions twice. From this biography emerges the double-sided portrait of a professional revolutionary loyally attached to Lenin, and of a leader emeritus as aware of strategy as of ideology, or even of administration. The author's insistence on Stalin's fidelity to the " father of the revolution " or on his military exploits seems to show that circumstances—especially the struggle against Kamenev, Zinoviev and Trotsky—influenced the writing of the article. Even career considerations to a certain extent dictated the mythicizing nature of Tovstukha's biography of Stalin.

[16] Ivan Tovstukha, *Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin. Kratkaya biografiya* (Leningrad and Moscow, 1927). Published in French translation in Georges Haupt and Jean-Jacques Marie, *Les bolchéviques par eux-mêmes* (Paris, 1969), pp. 60–64.

[17] This biography was no doubt written between 1924 and 1925.

[18] Jean-Jacques Marie, " Staline," in Georges Haupt and Jean-Jacques Marie, op. cit. p. 64.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid. p. 63.

The launching of the Stalin cult in 1929 gave rise to a hagiographical literature whose beginnings coincided with Stalin's 50th birthday celebrations on 21 December. A collection of articles written by the comrades-in-arms of the *gensek* appeared in Moscow under the title *Stalin*.[21] There were as many eulogies as there were essays. Tovstukha's expanded biography opened the collection, and far from retaining the neutrality of the first edition, it revealed the two traits—the two faults—of authorized biographies of Stalin: the slandering of his opponents and his own personal glorification. While Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev are accused of anti-Leninism and opportunism, Stalin is flattered:

> Since Lenin's death, Stalin is the most prominent man to continue his work, his most orthodox disciple, the initiator of the principal measures taken by the Party in its struggle for the construction of socialism; he is the leader recognized by the entire Party and by the Communist International.[22]

These words attest to Stalin's pre-eminence, which is confirmed by the message of his colleagues. Through the articles by Kalinin, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Manuilsky, Kuusinen, Krumin, Popov, Ordzhonikidze, Yaroslavsky, Bubnov and Yenukidze, the new mythology is somehow consecrated. The Party guarantees the legitimacy of the *curriculum vitae*. Who could doubt that Stalin was " Lenin's faithful disciple "? " There was never any disagreement between them."[23] Their friendship and understanding are coupled with the identification of the *gensek*'s life with the history of the Communist Party. Thirty years of revolutionary struggle, 30 years of Leninism. Stalin's authority is given legitimacy by his past as well as by his immense ability. The gifts of strategist, theoretician, organizer and leader are united in his person. Outstanding but modest, unconcerned with prestige. " His faith in Leninism, his iron determination to realize Leninism in daily life, his great organizational talents,"[24]—these are the characteristics of Lenin's successor according to the new popular orthodoxy.

While embellishing Stalin's life and giving him mythical status, the eulogy retains a certain degree of moderation—not so much in itself as in relation to the cult of the " father of the revolution " developed by the Party. Lenin is still the Hero. The developing Stalinist myth is dominated—and overdetermined—by the Leninist myth. Even Kaganovich, one of the initiators of the Stalin cult, began his commemorative article with a lengthy evocation of the founder of the Bolshevik Party.[25] The consecration of the " best Leninist " marks the recognition of a line of heritage: it was Lenin, and the holy Leninist writings, that gave legitimacy to the new cult.

Other collections of articles followed the one that appeared on Stalin's

[21] A French version was published in Paris in 1930 under the title *Staline*.
[22] *Staline* (Paris, 1930), pp. 29–30.
[23] Ibid. p. 132.
[24] Ibid. p. 133.
[25] Ibid. pp. 37–39.

50th birthday. In 1931, Yenukidze, Kaganovich, Voroshilov and Ordzhonikidze consolidated the developing legend in a book which brought together already distinctly hagiographical biographical texts.[26] Memoirs and commentaries supposedly covering Stalin's life accentuated the institutionalization of the eulogy—and of the myth. Only edifying and mythicizing facts are retained. Apart from these, all is mystery and silence.

THERE is a paradoxical contrast between the extent of the hagiographical writing and the relatively inconsistent nature of the information contained within it. Outside, or against, the reality of the man appears a mythical discourse, where omissions, impressions and falsehoods abound. History is reduced to a canvas where all jarring tones are eliminated. What matters is the attribution to Stalin of a coherent image, created through a stereotypical discourse.

Did Stalin intervene directly in the mythicizing process? Or did he remain in the background, as he loved to let us believe? From the first, the myth's very construction stemmed from a deliberate decision. According to the *Encyclopaedia Granat*, the 1927 *curriculum vitae* constitutes an " authorized biography." Later on, the accentuation of the myth seemed to fulfil Stalin's understandable needs. No initiative was taken by the *gensek*'s collaborators without first being duly discussed and approved. The cult of personality inaugurated at the Georgian's 50th birthday celebrations was not launched without prior agreement between Stalin and his henchmen. The corrections that historians and memoirists made to their studies at the beginning of the 1930s seemed to follow suggestions made by the Party leadership. The revised editions of the *Histories* of the Communist Party by Bubnov, Popov and Yaroslavsky were rewritten to centre around Stalin.

In autumn 1931, these suspicions were confirmed by a direct sermon to historians given by the Party leader. Under the pretext of condemning Slutsky's article " The Bolsheviks and German social-democracy during the pre-war crisis," he denounced, in a letter addressed to the journal *Proletarskaya revolyutsiya*, the " rotten liberalism " and the " Trotskyism " or " contraband anti-Leninism," which parades under the banner of history.[27] He demanded that historians reinforce their watchfulness on the theoretical front—in other words, that they make sure that the spirit of the Party flourishes. Historical truth is no longer something which scholars unearth and piece together, but is decided by the Party. In decreeing Lenin's infallibility concerning everything and against all odds, Stalin decreed his own as well.[28] The rewriting of history which the *gensek* ordered gave sanction to the burgeoning mythology.

Apart from these direct invitations to historians, did Stalin ask famous

[26] An English edition, entitled *The Life of Stalin*, was published in London in 1931.

[27] J. V. Stalin, " Some Questions Concerning the History of Bolshevism " in *Complete Works*, Vol. XIII (Moscow, 1955) pp. 86–104.

[28] Robert C. Tucker, " The Rise of Stalin's Personality Cult," in the *American Historical Review*, Vol. 84, 1979, No. 1, p. 356.

writers to write about him? According to certain information, it appears that he did ask two: the Russian Gorky, and the Frenchman Barbusse. He apparently had only limited success with the former.[29] Gorky agreed to join the editorial committee of the *History of the Russian Revolution*,[30] but not to write a book to the glory of the Georgian. Stalin had better luck with Barbusse, and the first official life history of Stalin[31] was written by the author of *Le Feu*. Published in 1935, it came out first in France and then in the Soviet Union in two forms: in *Pravda* and as a book with a first edition which ran to hundreds of thousands of copies.[32] In a way, Barbusse gave Stalin the literary sanction he had sought in vain from Gorky. Did he directly order the book to be written, as rumour had it? The interviews he gave to the author attest at least to his complicity in the matter.

Called *Stalin. A New World Seen through One Man's Life*, the book by the communist writer unreservedly praises the communist leader. Everything about Stalin is lauded—his life, his work, his personal qualities and his physical attributes. Often inspired by the 1929 commemorative articles, Barbusse's essay is an exemplary account, in which biographical information is blended with ideological considerations and interspersed with descriptions of the Soviet Union. In spite of the book's length (320 pages in the first edition of 1935), it lists barely any more events in his life than the previous short biographies. The same refrains appear—here and there revised and amplified. While in 1927 myth did not inevitably contradict reality, in 1935 mythicizing had turned into invention and lies. Iosif Vissarionovich's early revolutionary activity was now recounted through fresh examples: his great militancy is illustrated by six arrests and five escapes—instead of five and four respectively in Tovstukha's biography—his extreme heroism during the Civil War is demonstrated by new military exploits. What is more, his entry " into Leninism " is confirmed by Stalin's confidences, proving how early on it had happened: he discovered Lenin in 1898, received a letter from the Bolshevik leader in 1903, their first meeting took place in 1905 during the Tammerfors Conference. The extent of the harmony that united Lenin and Stalin is duly underscored and described in detail. The *gensek* is truly the " Lenin of today."[33]

While previously history had been more or less based on sequences of events, recent history had been made to seem like a report from Congress. 1917 marked this change. After this date, it is only Stalin's actions and words that are recounted, or else tales of the struggle against the opposition. A chapter called " The Parasitic War " was devoted to the

[29] See Boris Souvarine, " Avant-propos," in Maxim Gorky, *Pensées intempestives* (Lausanne, 1953) p. 14; Alexander Orlov, *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes* (New York, 1953) pp. 273–74.

[30] M. Gorky, V. Molotov, K. Voroshilov, S. Kirov, A. Zhdanov and J. Stalin, *History of the Russian Revolution* (Moscow, 2 vols., 1937).

[31] Henri Barbusse, *Staline. Un monde nouveau vu à travers un homme* (Paris, 1935). The edition was followed by a popular abridged edition.

[32] Henri Barbusse, " Otrivok iz knigi *Stalin*," in *Pravda*, 7 Nov. 1935. The Russian edition appeared several weeks later.

[33] Henri Barbusse, *Staline*, op. cit. p. 312.

intrigues and treason of Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev and others opposed to Stalin.[34] Stalin the man disappeared behind the Soviet Union and behind the Party. Any mention of his personal life—with the one exception of a few lines about his deceased second wife and her three children—is excluded, for the life of the " man of steel " is merged with the life of the Party.

The exemplary nature of his life was made complete by his exemplary personality. His gifts and qualities are superhuman:

> He is a man of steel. His name shows this: Stalin—steel. He is both inflexible and flexible, like steel. His power lies in his great common sense, the extent of his knowledge, his astonishing internal order, his passion for clarity, his methodical approach, the speed, certainty and intensity of his decision-making, his perpetual desire to choose the right man for the right job.[35]

But we must not get it wrong! Behind the Stalin of steel, there is a humorous Stalin, ironic and good-natured, attentive to his family and friends—and beyond—to all Soviet citizens. He believes in the people, just as the people believe in him. He is the good father who presides over the destiny of the new proletarian state, with goodness, intelligence and wisdom, but also with intransigence and severity.

Barbusse finds even Stalin's physique enchanting. It is by evoking his " scholar's head," his " worker's face," and his " simple soldier's dress " that the French writer ends his book.[36]

The Georgian thus emerges from Barbusse's biography totally mythicized. From one end of the book to the other, Stalin's life is shown to be exemplary: it is almost the image of a superman that appears. Stalin is truly the worthy successor to Lenin.

IF the author of *Le Feu* essentially fulfils the goal of mythogenesis, he equally satisfies the more immediate demands of the struggle against the opposition. The discourse of myth doubles as indictment. Mythogenesis is balanced by the denunciation of Trotskyism or Right-ism draped in diabolical garb. But beyond the rhetoric of good and evil to which Barbussian discourse is limited, the book seems incidentally to echo the foremost issues of the time. It is not without guile that Barbusse mentions the assassination of Sergei Kirov by Nikolaev on 1 December 1934. By insinuating that the murder had been committed by the " rotten remains of the former Zinoviev-Kamenev-Trotsky opposition, allied to Tsarist cut-throats and foreign accomplices,"[37] he directly supports Stalin's theses. Whether or not he was obliged by his own Soviet partners to insert these direct accusations does not matter. What does matter is that he lent credence to the rumours developing in 1935 that there was a conspiracy against Stalin and the Party.

[34] Ibid. pp. 180–218.
[35] Ibid. p. 311.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid. p. 207.

In 1937, Lavrenty Beria wrote another authorized biography of Stalin.[38] Unlike its predecessors, it mainly covers the revolutionary struggle in the Caucasus. According to the author, it was of prime importance to correct and contradict the work of Caucasian historians, particularly the studies of P. Makharadze, A. Yenukidze and M. Orakelashvili, in which Stalin's role as initiator and leader of the Caucasian revolutionary movement at the turn of the century had been underestimated.

Even more so than Barbusse's essay or the 1929 panegyric, the study by the First Secretary of the Transcaucasian regional committee revises the history of both the Party and of Iosif Vissarionovich. The Georgian's revolutionary precocity, his militancy, his authority and his unshakeable Bolshevism are illustrated by a wealth of detail, some of it true, some revised or reinterpreted, and some invented. We see Stalin leading the Tiflis workers on 1 May 1900, or, from as early as 1904, leading the "Transcaucasian Bolshevik Organizations,"[39] or launching and directing in Tiflis seven newspapers published in Georgian, Russian and Armenian, and in Baku eight newspapers published in these same languages, plus one in Turkish. Behind a façade of plain fact, Beria's four lectures give further strength to the Stalinist myth. It is not without good reason that they met with such resounding ideological success in the Soviet Union.[40]

Turning the past into a travesty goes in tandem with its suppression. Everything that contradicts the official image is either concealed or eliminated. While histories that mythicized and edified were triumphing, newly heretical books emerged from libraries and bookshops, and the memoirs of old Bolsheviks fell under the censor's axe. Stanislaw Kossior, at that time First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party, who was considering publishing his memoirs, gave up due to Stalin's opposition.[41] Historical and biographical "truths" were conceived in the same mould as that of the one and indivisible Stalinist truth.

STALIN'S control of history was strengthened by his participation in the preparation of *The History of the Russian Revolution* and especially of *The History of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the USSR*, in which the close relation, from 1898 onwards, of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party—and its Bolshevik faction—to the revolutionary Georgian is raised to the status of a paradigm of Soviet

[38] Lavrenty Beria, *K voprosu ob istorii bolshevistskikh organizatsiy v Zakavkazie* (Moscow, 1935). It was published in English as *On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia* (New York, 1939). The English version was published after the fourth Russian edition. The English subtitle clearly says: *Stalin's Early Writings and Activities*. The text was originally presented on 21 and 22 July in the form of four lectures to Party cadres at Tiflis.

[39] Lavrenty Beria, *On the History* . . . op. cit. p. 22.

[40] There were already five editions by 1939.

[41] Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror, Stalin's Purges of the Thirties* (Macmillan, London, 1968. Revised edition by Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1971), p. 131 in Penguin edition. In 1939, Kossior was arrested and shot without trial.

historical science.[42] To the extent that this *Short Course* was imposed on activists, schoolchildren, students and officials, and that the entire body of non-conformist literature was censored, the enterprise resulted in reconstructing the Soviet collective memory.

The short biography of Stalin that appeared under the auspices of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute on 21 December 1939 in *Pravda*, on the occasion of the 60th birthday of the *gensek*, records the life of the " brilliant successor to Lenin's work " in the light of the latest discoveries by qualified historiographers and according to the latest wishes of Stalin himself.[43] His virtues are yet further accentuated, as are the faults of his enemies. Mythicizing is balanced throughout by denunciation. From disgrace to purge, Stalin, all but alone, retains his glory. A few comrades are still mentioned—dead ones like Dzerzhinski, Frunze, Sverdlov, Shaumyan, Kirov, Ordzhonikidze, but also living ones such as Budyenny, Voroshilov, Kalinin, Molotov, Zhdanov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Andreev, Khrushchev, Beria, Shvernik and the explorer Papanin.

Even Lenin's status is reduced in a sense—or rather, Stalin is raised up to his level. Upon their shoulders falls the entire credit for the revolution:

> With boldness and assurance, steadfastness and foresight, Lenin and Stalin led the Party and the working class towards the socialist revolution, towards armed insurrection. Lenin and Stalin were the inspirers and organizers of the victorious socialist October Revolution. Stalin, Lenin's closest colleague, himself directed all the preparations for insurrection.[44]

The great military exploits of the *Vozhd'* continued through the Civil War. Victories against Denikin, Kolchak, Yudenich and Wrangel, or even against the Poles in 1920, were due to him. " The name of Stalin is written on the Red Army's most glorious victories."[45] Exit Trotsky, whose talents and exploits Stalin appropriates. Even the figure of Lenin fades in the brilliance of the Georgian's extraordinary gifts and achievements.

Everything corresponds to this image. First, Stalin's adolescence: " At 15, Stalin was already a revolutionary." Then, his career as a professional revolutionary. The number of his arrests and escapes rose from six and five respectively in Barbusse's text, to seven and six. Lastly, his reign after Lenin's death. Five-year plans, the socialist reconstruction of the entire national economy, the 1936 Constitution—all these are attributed to Stalin.

He was great in his actions and equally great in his thought. His writings were given the same status as those of his illustrious ancestors. His report on the project for the New Constitution is compared with " Marxism's

[42] The French version appeared in Moscow in 1939 called *Histoire du parti communiste (bolchévique) de l'URSS. Précis rédigé par une commission du Comité Central du P.C. (b) et approuvé par le Comité Central du P.C. (b) de l'URSS.* It is commonly known as the *Short Course.*

[43] " Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin. Kratkaya biografiya," in *Pravda*, 21 Dec. 1939. Immediately published in book form. Appeared in French under the title *J. V. Staline. Essai biographique* (Moscow, 1945).

[44] Ibid. p. 26.

[45] Ibid. p. 33.

greatest work, the *Communist Manifesto*."[46] Enriched by the imagination, this mythology of Stalin ends by saying " Long live the invincible flag of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin,"[47] which well illustrates the narrowly ideological thrust of the *Biographical Essay*.

A new biography of Stalin, by Emelyan Yaroslavsky, was published in 1940.[48] Written with the same—if not greater—justificatory goal in mind as its predecessors, it is limited to strict hagiography, respectful of all the conventions of that genre. Just what *wasn't* Stalin according to this book! One of the founders of Marxism-Leninism, the greatest contemporary theoretician, Lenin's closest colleague since the creation of the Bolshevik party, the creator, with Lenin, of the Communist International, the builder of the first socialist state in the world, a master and father to everyone.

The inflation of Stalin's attributes went hand in hand with the rewriting of history. Childhood, adolescence and revolutionary career were illustrated by new actions, new achievements! Top of his class, leader of all school games, assiduous scholar, gifted artist and singer. He was interested in everything—literature, philosophy, chemistry, geology, poetry. From a very young age, he is characterized by omniscience, as he is by his revolutionary spirit: " When he was a schoolboy, he used to chat with workers and peasants; he would explain to them the causes of their poverty."[49] It was at the Tiflis Seminary that he was initiated into Leninism through an article by Tulin, alias Lenin. Precocious genius and genius plain and simple. By Ilyich's side, he led, activated and gave theoretical foundations to the revolutionary movement. While 1905 was partly a result of his efforts, 1917 was especially so. " He is the master spirit of three revolutions."[50] His qualities and previous actions were even further inflated. It was Stalin who discovered—before anyone else—Trotsky's treason or the errors of Right or Left deviationists. His was a decisive role in 1917, still more decisive in the struggle against the White Russians, and even more decisive in the construction of " Socialism-in-One-Country." Lenin and Stalin—what a duo! What a friendship! Even during Ilyich's illness, Stalin stayed by his side, as Gorky's most hackneyed phrases tell us. It is Stalin who will realize Lenin's dream of " collective farms and thousands of tractors."[51]

Stalin shines in every sphere. No science holds any secrets for him. His achievements are balanced by his theoretical work. Stalin is the Lenin of today in every sense.

[46] Ibid. p. 63.
[47] Ibid. p. 72.
[48] Emelyan Yaroslavsky, *O tovarishche Staline* (Moscow, 1941). Its English title was *Landmarks in the Life of Stalin* (Moscow, 1941). Old Bolshevik, former Party secretary, member of the Central Committee, Yaroslavsky is the author of a *History of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*, in which Stalin's importance is scarcely remarked upon in the 1929 edition. Duly chastized by the *gensek* in 1931, Yaroslavsky introduced the desirable—and desired—changes into the later editions.
[49] Emelyan Yaroslavsky, op. cit. p. 8.
[50] Ibid. p. 5.
[51] Ibid. p. 137.

HAGIOGRAPHICAL writing accumulates quotations as it evolves, developing as it does so into an indictment of the " enemies of the people." More than the bureaucrats from the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, Yaroslavsky illustrates and denounces the wrongdoings of the " opposition," thus extending his essay devoted to the recent trials.[52] Trotskyist evil appears as a *leitmotiv* throughout his book. It is an obsessive image which seems to betray the subject written about, as much as the biographer himself. Mythicizing and slandering—the twins are reunited again. This biography is a kind of justification for the trials and purges. Real, historical vicissitudes overdetermine the process of myth-making.

Behind the hagiographical discourse lies an indirect response to the counter-discourse circulating at the time, in which Stalin's name was being dragged through the mud. One could go so far as to say that the myth itself tends to redress the balance of the Trotskyist image of Stalin contained in the literature left by Lev Davidovich on the revolution, on the construction of the Soviet state, on the conflicts between currents inside the CPSU and, above all, on the *gensek* himself. Why else should so much emphasis be placed on Stalin's role in the Civil War, or the Transcaucasian affair—when, in 1922, the Georgian had acted against local communists with vigour or brutality, depending on the perspective—or on the crimes of the opposition? From a functional point of view, glorification includes both justification and elevation: the rewriting of history consists, first and foremost, in the affirmation of self against others.

This is even more pronounced in the last biography of Stalin, published in 1947, by six authors: G. F. Aleksandrov, M. P. Galaktyonov, V. S. Khrushchev, M. B. Mitin, W. D. Mochalov and P. N. Pospelov.[53] Two hundred pages. Photographs. After the *Short Course*, this became the new Stalinist orthodoxy. With millions of copies published, translated into all the different languages of the USSR, into the languages of the people's democracies and into still more languages, it became the Bible of both the leaders and the led. In schools and universities, children and students were practically forced to commit it to memory. There is no other truth—that is, no truth apart from the one contained in the person of Stalin. The entire enterprise amounts to soothsaying. The Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, which had brought out the first version of the biography, found the time to produce a second, revised and expanded edition, although it had still not managed to produce official biographies of Marx, Engels or Lenin! The second edition contains corrected details and adds an eleventh chapter on the " Great Patriotic War " and on the post-war period.

Did Stalin participate in the writing of his own biography as he had participated in the *Short Course*? In the report to the 20th Congress of the

[52] Emelyan Yaroslavsky, *The Meaning of the Soviet Trials* (New York, 1938).

[53] G. F. Aleksandrov, M. P. Galaktyonov, V. S. Khrushchev, M. B. Mitin, W. D. Mochalov, *Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin. Kratkaya biografiya* (Moscow, 1947) The English version appeared in Moscow in 1950 entitled *Joseph Stalin. A Short Biography*.

CPSU, Khrushchev claimed that he did.[54] He stated that Stalin not only approved the adulation, but added new praise, " written by his own hand, of the book's project."[55] In a way, the *gensek* was the master craftsman of his own cult. Khrushchev gave eloquent examples. The myth's crowning glory is certainly the Generalissimo's insistence on his own modesty. This is what he adds to the Institute's project: " Although he took on the function of leader of the Party and of the people with consummate skill and enjoyed the unqualified support of the Soviet nation, Stalin was free of vanity, pretensions or personal glorification."[56] According to Khrushchev, the Party chief made many alterations to the text. Stalin shamelessly boasts of his political, ideological and military prowess. He praises especially his own strategic genius, characterized not only by his scientific understanding of combat, but also by his ability to guess the enemy's plans in advance and to thwart them.[57] While the 1939 version of the *Short Course* was said to be written " under Stalin's direction and with his active personal help,"[58] the new edition is attributed to comrade Stalin alone: " In 1938, the *History of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Soviet Union*, an account written by comrade Stalin and approved by a Central Committee commission of the CP(b) of the Soviet Union, was published."[59] Beyond the *Short Course*, the entire recent history of the Soviet Union seems to have been co-opted by Stalin for his own profit.

THE forms taken by Stalinist hagiography reveal its function. The life story—already largely transformed into myth—is limited to events during the years preceding NEP. Following this date, references to his *curriculum vitae* consist essentially of listing and quoting his speeches and reports to Congress. His personal life is removed from the text, as is his political life, apart from his denunciation of " enemies of the people." What remains is a catalogue of Soviet achievements which are all linked by a kind of osmosis through the name of the " father of the people." Praise and insult seem to be as valid as the mythicized *curriculum vitae* in the strategy of legitimation and glorification. From the first self-laudatory biographies, the discourse is overloaded with superlative compliments, and insults directed at his adversaries. Myth, eulogy and indictment are closely intertwined. This rhetoric borrows from the simplistic language of the Moscow Trials as easily as from the banal lexicon of flattery. From (auto)biography to (auto)biography, this discourse becomes a systematic enterprise of deification and " diabolization," while seeming to operate within the framework of a Marxist-Leninist interpretation of history. The very term " abridged," which Stalin and his collaborators liked so much, attests to the popularized character of the official biographies and the

[54] See the text of the report in Branko Lazich, *Le Rapport Khrouchtchev et son Histoire* (Paris, 1976).
[55] Ibid. p. 133.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid. p. 135.
[58] Ibid. p. 135. See also *J. V. Staline. Essai Biographique*, op. cit. p. 64.
[59] Branko Lazich, op. cit. p. 136. See also G. F. Aleksandrov, *Joseph Stalin. A Short Biography*, op. cit. p. 139.

Short Course in which Stalinist truth resides. The common procedures of the over-evaluation and invention of the talents and virtues of the *gensek*, the concealment of unacceptable facts and the denigration of the adversary betray Stalinism's unavowed intentions. What matters is not so much to show as to affirm, not so much to convince as to impose. History and biography are only ever used for political, ideological and narcissistic reasons: mythogenesis is written into the very fabric of Stalinism.

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All Stalin's Men

David Floyd

VOROSHILOV, Mikoyan, Suslov, Molotov, Kaganovich and Malenkov—not names to excite the headline writers of the Western press today and probably meaningless to the younger half of the population. But all of them men who in their day wielded immense power, subject only to Stalin's overriding command. As Roy Medvedev points out in the preface to this rogues' gallery,* he could have chosen others who were no less powerful at various times—Yezhov, Beria, Yagoda, Vyshinsky, for example—but he decided to limit his study to the six named above because they were " men who joined the Party and began their political careers when Lenin was still alive, pursued them with comparative success under Stalin, surviving the appalling Stalin era, and were still politically active in Khrushchev's time." Three of them—Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich—are still alive today.

All six were for many years at the top of the Soviet regime: " It was on these people that Stalin relied; they were essential to him in the establishment of his totalitarian dictatorship. But he was essential to them too if they were to preserve their share of influence and power, and this is what makes them typical representatives of the Stalinist system."

They were, Medvedev says, " a very unfriendly lot and they all fought with each other, which was exactly what Stalin wanted." But they were all ready to do Stalin's bidding:

> Anyone who was unable to commit a criminal act was not merely removed from power but physically eliminated. This special process of selection was one through which all six of these men passed more successfully than others. They all travelled the road along which revolutionary tenacity degenerates into callousness, even sadism, political flexibility into pragmatism, and enthusiasm into demagoguery . . .
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> Theirs was no ordinary competitive sport: it entailed stepping over the bodies not only of real enemies of the Party and revolution but also of people whom they themselves falsely represented as enemies of the Party and revolution.

They were a pretty nasty lot and none of them really deserves a place in the history books. They were simply the men whom Stalin chose to do his dirty work: unprincipled, fearful, efficient. After all, he had to have *someone* to carry out his orders. They are not worthy of much attention. Nevertheless Roy Medvedev has done a useful job by looking into their careers and painting these unattractive portraits.

Klim Voroshilov was the least important but by far the most colourful

**All Stalin's Men* by Roy Medvedev, (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1983).

of the six leaders. He was the " Red Marshal " who gained a reputation for bravery in the Civil War but who had a very limited knowledge of military affairs. He became Stalin's tame soldier and even close friend and owed his survival to his total obedience to Stalin's demands. Medvedev quotes a comment attributed to Marshal Tukhachevsky:

> It has to be said that Voroshilov is not very clever, but he has at least the virtue that he does not try to be clever, and he agrees eagerly with everything.

Voroshilov's supreme test came during the terror of the late 1930s, when Stalin destroyed between 25,000 and 30,000 officers of the Soviet Army and Navy. On this episode Medvedev comments:

> What was the role of People's Commissar Voroshilov in this fearful massacre of the military cadres? We have no proof that it was actually Voroshilov who compiled the blacklists of those to be arrested and shot, but Stalin did not need Voroshilov for that. It was enough that Voroshilov should sanction all the arrests and that he should sign most of the lists, together with Stalin and Yezhov. None of the high-ranking army men could have been arrested without the knowledge and concurrence of the People's Commissar for Defence—and Voroshilov always gave his consent.

Voroshilov made no great contribution to the defeat of Hitler's armies and after the war was given jobs in the " cultural " field. His comrades in Stalin's entourage treated him with " contempt and disgust " and his friend Stalin even went so far as to accuse him of being a " British spy." In the confusion of the post-Stalin power struggle poor Klim was quite lost, siding first with Khrushchev, then with the " anti-Party group " and later recanting. In the end he was saved from complete disgrace by Khrushchev's appeal for " magnanimity." When he died at the end of 1969 he was granted the final honour of burial near the Kremlin wall, which was more than Khrushchev himself was given.

THE second exhibit in the rogues' gallery, the wily Armenian Anastas Mikoyan, was a very different customer from Voroshilov. He managed to remain a Soviet leader for 55 years, not by unquestioning blind loyalty to Stalin so much as by the exercise of his wits. He walked a very difficult tightrope with considerable skill for more than half a century.

Whether or not Mikoyan had a special relationship with Stalin because of their common Caucasian background, Stalin appreciated Mikoyan's sharp mind and shrewdness. It was Mikoyan whom he chose to carry out some of his more "delicate " operations, notably the sale to the West of many of the greatest treasures in Russia's art collections.

Mikoyan managed to gain, both in the West and in Russia, the reputation of being, if not a " liberal," at least a reasonably decent official. But, according to Medvedev, Stalin thought so highly of him that

he wanted him to succeed Menzhinsky as head of the GPU. Mikoyan managed to dodge the job, as he managed to dodge responsibility for the worst aspects of Stalin's rule. Of the punitive actions of the early 1930s, Medvedev comments: " He may not have been the instigator of these acts of terror, but nor did he ever come out in protest against them."

During the terror of the late 1930s, Medvedev says, Mikoyan as a member of the Politburo

> could not actually decline to take part in the terror, nor could he refuse to bear his share of responsibility for Politburo decisions that resulted in the terrible events of that decade.
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> Stalin did not merely sign the lists of those intended for " liquidation " presented to him by N. I. Yezhov; he also passed them round to the other Politburo members. Furthermore, People's Commissars had to sanction the arrest of leading members of their own staff, so it is difficult to believe that Mikoyan knew nothing about the repression of many of the top personnel in the food industry and in commerce. By contrast, G. K. Ordzhonikidze, who had tried to protect his staff, was driven to suicide in 1937.

It was then, according to Medvedev, that Stalin hinted that there was something fishy about Mikoyan's survival of the shooting of the 26 Baku commissars. " So he submitted to Stalin. At the February–March Central Committee Plenum he was put in charge of a commission whose brief was to decide the fate of Bukharin and Rykov. Its terms of reference were brief and to the point: ' Arrest. Try. Shoot.' "

Mikoyan continued to perform his balancing act after Stalin's death, notably when Khrushchev proposed to raise the question of Stalin's crimes at the 20th Party Congress. " Nearly all the members of the Presidium were against such a move; Mikoyan neither supported nor opposed Khrushchev on this occasion." But eventually he came down on Khrushchev's side and was used again for " delicate " missions—the Cuban missile crisis and the Hungarian revolt. But in 1965 he retired from public life. The great survivor who had served the Soviet regime so well and so long was not deemed worthy of burial at the Kremlin wall. His remains were interred near Khrushchev's in the Novodevichy cemetery.

But Mikhail Suslov, who died in January 1982, was buried, as Medvedev points out, " with official honours of the kind that no other Party or state leader had been accorded since the funeral of Stalin." Suslov died in harness, the second most powerful figure in the Soviet system, the Party's " chief ideologist " and *éminence grise*.

It has never been entirely clear to me what being the Party's " ideologist " meant, especially since, as Medvedev says, Suslov " added nothing new to Party theory, made not one original remark." " In his thirty-five years in top jobs in the Central Committee he did not write a single book." So much for the " great theoretician "!

But Medvedev describes just what the role of " chief ideologist " involved. Ideology in the Soviet Union, he explains, " is not merely an aspect of propaganda and agitation or a topic of social science; it is also a

vitally important instrument of power." Suslov stood " at the apex of a pyramid of institutions," and it is a very big pyramid:

> In the Central Committee he supervised the sections dealing with culture, agitation and propaganda, science, schools and institutions of higher education, two international sections, the political administration of the Soviet Army, the Central Committee's information department and its training commission, and the department dealing with the Komsomol and social organisations. He also had overall control of, and supervised, the Ministry of Culture, the State Publishing Committee, the Cinematography Committee, television and radio, the entire press and censorship apparatus, the official news agency TASS, the CPSU's links with other Communist parties, and Soviet foreign policy.

That was not all. Medvedev says Suslov had to work closely with the KGB and the State Prosecutor's office. He devoted much attention to the Writers' Union and the other " creative " unions, the theatres and " friendship " organizations. He ran the Party education system and the nation-wide lecture network. " He was in charge of the publication of school textbooks, all social science institutes and state relations with the various religious bodies and church organizations." He was also responsible for organizing the various jubilee and birthday celebrations.

With such a workload Suslov may perhaps be excused for not having had much time to think or to make any original contributions to Marxist thought. This supreme educator had had only a very limited education himself. His learning was of a more practical kind. In 1944 he was sent to the Baltic states to do Stalin's dirty work there and complete the process of " sovietization." Soon after that he was made a Secretary of the Central Committee in Moscow, where he remained to the end of his days.

As far as ideology was concerned, Medvedev says, " his primary object was to commit no ideological error—that is to say, never to come into conflict with the political aims of the ruling hierarchy."

After Stalin's death, however, Suslov began to play an active part in the various battles that went on in the Kremlin. He backed Khrushchev against Malenkov and the " anti-Party group " in 1957; then in 1964 he took the initiative in organizing Khrushchev's removal; in 1967 it was he who proposed the appointment of Yurii Andropov as head of the KGB; and he had a hand in the expulsion of Solzhenitsyn and the exile of Andrei Sakharov.

What Suslov knew best was how to survive in the Soviet system. He lived through the reigns of Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev and would no doubt have got along well with their successors. He was, as Medvedev says, " a very good *apparatchik*." So much for the " chief ideologist."

VYACHESLAV Molotov is probably the only one of Medvedev's subjects whose name might strike a note for the present generation in Russia and the West, if only for the fact that the " Molotov cocktail," or petrol bomb, is still used by urban guerrillas who have not been equipped

with anti-tank weapons. He was for many years Stalin's foreign minister and his right-hand man (in so far as anyone could be so described). He signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact with Ribbentrop in 1939 and was, as Medvedev reminds us, " the only Soviet political leader to shake Hitler's hand."

At the various post-war conferences Molotov poured out hundreds of thousands of words, few of which are of any lasting significance. It was then that he came to be associated with the word *nyet*, which generally reflected the Soviet attitude to negotiating with the West. But there is one short sentence which he pronounced on being told by the German ambassador in Moscow that Germany and the Soviet Union were at war and which is, I believe, one of the most revealing remarks in modern history. " What did we do to deserve this?" Molotov muttered to Schulenburg. It was one of his very few spontaneous remarks.

Another remark of Molotov's, hitherto unrecorded, is perhaps worth noting here. Finding myself next to him at a Kremlin reception in the late 1950s, I seized the opportunity of mentioning that I had started to write his biography. " Oh dear, I suppose I shall get it in the neck there!" he said (*mne tam dostanetsya navernoye*). That was the end of the conversation. It seemed to me like an admission that he had a great deal to answer for.

Molotov was in fact the perfect man of Stalin. He was very hardworking, utterly unoriginal in his thought, ever ready to do Stalin's bidding, and ever ready to accept whatever humiliation Stalin thought fit to inflict on him. This included seeing his wife, Polina Zhemchuzhina, sent to the camps. When Mikunic, leader of the Israeli Communist Party, taxed him with this in 1955 Molotov said:

> Because I am a member of the Politburo and I must obey Party discipline . . . I submitted to the Politburo, which had decided that my wife must be put away.

In this connection Medvedev relates a remarkable scene which took place on the day of Stalin's funeral, 9 March 1953. Khrushchev and Malenkov asked him what he would like for a present. " Give me back Polina," he replied. Polina was then already back in Moscow, being prepared for a part in the great " Zionist conspiracy " trial which Stalin and Beria had been concocting. She was returned to Molotov the same evening.

Molotov tried to survive in the confusion of the post-Stalin era, but he was lost without his master. He backed Khrushchev, then fell out with him and was finally ousted as a member of the " anti-Party group." Khrushchev's " magnanimity " permitted Molotov to occupy a couple of retirement jobs, first as ambassador in Mongolia and then with the Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. But in 1961 he was deprived of all his positions and expelled from the Party he had served so well so long. He is apparently still to be seen pottering around in Moscow, occasionally being recognized by someone who has the honesty to denounce him to his face. He is 94.

OLD Bolsheviks live long—at any rate those who survived Stalin do. Lazar Kaganovich is only a few years younger than Molotov. He will be 91 this year and lives the quiet life of a pensioner in a block of flats in Moscow. Medvedev gives a striking picture of a man " on whose conscience there are quite as many crimes as there were on the consciences of those who were hanged in 1946 at Nuremburg under sentence of the International Tribunal." Kaganovich was mainly Stalin's work-horse for industry: he was supremely responsible for whatever successes were registered in the Soviet economy in the 1930s. He was a great slave-driver. But he had also inevitably to be involved in the criminal acts without which no one could remain at the summit of the Soviet regime. Medvedev says:

> During the investigations that were carried out after the Twentieth Party Congress of 1956 dozens of letters from Kaganovich to the NKVD were discovered, complete with lists of the Party workers whom he wanted arrested. In many cases he personally checked draft verdicts and made arbitrary alterations.

Lazar Kaganovich is a Jew, one of the few to survive in the upper echelons of the Party under Stalin. Naturally, to protect himself, he tried to demonstrate his own anti-Semitism. But when the campaign against Jews gathered strength in the post-war years Kaganovich's position was also affected. Then, having survived Stalin, he found himself under threat from his protégé Khrushchev, who again showed his " magnanimity."

In 1960 he retired and was permitted to live quietly in Moscow:

> To relieve the boredom of isolation Kaganovich would spend some time in the large yard outside his apartment house and indulge in a game of dominoes with other old men. In fact, he was soon the acknowledged dominoes champion of the neighbourhood. Play would normally come to an end when daylight failed until Kaganovich, calling on the services of some of his old contacts, somehow persuaded the local authorities to provide a shelter with electric light. Now the old-age pensioners of the Frunze Embankment can play dominoes until late at night.

Kaganovich is lucky to be able to end his days in such peaceful circumstances.

Last of the rogues in this gallery is Georgi Malenkov, whom Medvedev sums up as " the ' heir ' who never was." Although he had clambered over a lot of corpses, including those Party officials killed in the " Leningrad Affair," and appeared to be the natural successor to Stalin, Medvedev claims that this had certainly not occurred to Stalin himself. " Far from being preoccupied by his death and its aftermath, Stalin had no thought other than to rule the country for a long time to come."

Having come to the top as a faceless Party bureaucrat always doing Stalin's will, Malenkov could not cope with the situation after the dictator's death. His principal ally, Beria, was removed and he had no friends among the other leaders. Khrushchev simply outplayed him.

" Work in the Party apparatus had not cultivated in Malenkov the qualities that ten years of independent work in the Ukraine had produced in Khrushchev." Malenkov was defeated along with other members of the " anti-Party group " and finished up running a power station in Ust-Kamenogorsk. Since 1961 he has been living in retirement in Moscow. He is said to have been baptized and to attend church regularly. But, as Medvedev says: " He is a squalid, evil man who has lived a squalid, evil, unworthy life. His crimes will not be forgotten, however devoutly he prays."

All these creatures of Stalin were killers, and killers on a grand scale. If they had been creatures of Hitler they would have been sought out long ago and punished. But, since they served the Soviet and not the Nazi regime, they have escaped the punishment they deserve, at worst living out their retirement unmolested and at best being buried with honours. Medvedev says he wrote the book to drive home the point that " democratic mechanisms and institutions must be created in the Soviet Union that will ensure that people like Stalin and most of those around him can never again hold power or assume control of the country."

To me the lesson of " Stalin's Men " is just the reverse: that the Soviet system will always push to the top people like the ones Medvedev has described. Nothing has happened since Stalin died to indicate that a new era has arrived.

Final Judgment

John Macdonald

"FOR me, my life in the Soviet Union ended when my thirty-seven years in the Soviet courts ended. I delivered my last defence speech on June 20, 1977." So ends Dina Kaminskaya's absorbing account of her experiences as a trial lawyer in Moscow.*

She was involved in the Sinyavsky and Daniel trial, defended the young Bukovsky, and represented two of the people who were in Red Square at noon on 25 August 1968 to protest at the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. We see these, and a string of other political trials, from the vantage point of the advocate's bench, but the centre piece of the book, and what made it for me of exceptional interest, is the 92 pages in which Dina Kaminskaya describes an ordinary criminal trial.

This is her fight to clear Sasha Kabanov, a 15-year-old boy who, with Alik Burov, was wrongly accused of the rape and murder of one of his class-mates. Like so much court-room drama it is a compelling story, but is also instructive, and, I think, important, because it shows the Soviet courts at work in a situation which has no political overtones.

The two boys had both confessed to the crime and withdrawn their confessions before Mrs Kaminskaya was instructed in the case. She was brought in because the procurator had accused the boys' first lawyer of having put pressure on the boys to plead not guilty. From the start there was a struggle between the investigators and the defence lawyers. As the story unfolds Mrs Kaminskaya gives us a fascinating insight into the way the attitudes of a police state spill over into a non-controversial case and into the less sinister prejudices of lawyers. The case was tried three times. The first judge's reluctance to believe that the establishment and investigators can have acted improperly will have a familiar ring to many English lawyers.

But this is not the whole story. The Court of Appeal and the third trial judge acted impeccably. This is the law at its best. Two or three months after the trial Dina Kaminskaya met Judge Petukhov in the corridor of the Supreme Court. " We were delighted to see each other as people are who have taken part together in something worthwhile. Petukhov invited me into his office and we started to reminisce." Dina asked the judge why he had turned down the defence application for him to view the scene of the alleged crime and he explained that it was because he had already been there on his own initiative. " I saw it all—the lake, the spit of sand running out into the water, and the glade where Marina's sweater was found."

In 1978 after Mrs Kaminskaya had been compelled to leave the Soviet

* *Final Judgement* by Dina Kaminskaya is published by Harvill Press (London, 1983) at £12·95.

Union, I showed her round the Law Courts in London. At the time I was surprised that she seemed so at home and found the procedure and atmosphere of our courts so familiar. I understand that better now.

DINA Kaminskaya's book is also a chilling reminder of the way in which the Soviet courts in political trials brush Soviet law to one side and produce whatever result the Party machine requires. We in the West need to be constantly reminded that this is the reality. I frequently meet people who believe that Yurii Orlov or Alek Ginzburg must have done something wrong because they have been tried and sentenced by the Soviet courts. Dina Kaminskaya gives the lie to such sloppy thinking.

Perhaps the strongest overall impression *Final Judgement* leaves is of Dina Kaminskaya's passionate concern for the law, and this is what makes the theme of the book one of hope. It is clear that Dina Kaminskaya was not alone in her love for the law. In all branches of the Soviet legal system there are men and women who are troubled about the double standards which apply in political and non-political cases. They know that respect for the law is of the essence in a civilized society. It must also be an essential ingredient of any meaningful *détente* between East and West. It is the testimony of a brave advocate who reports what she has seen fairly and with great clarity.

Orwell In Our Time

Alain Besançon

ORWELL is becoming the most important English writer in twentieth-century literature. He is already the best loved. In communist countries his books are fervently and lovingly copied out by hand. Their possession is punished with heavy penalties. To take such risks for a book: can there be a more honourable measure of glory? In the West Orwell's posthumous success is increasing with every year. He was once considered a marginal author, obsessed with dark fantasies that bore no relation to reality. Is it reality which has changed? Today's forebodings lead us to the author of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The date 1984 tolls like a funeral bell; it is supposed to herald a cosmic catastrophe. Who authorized this author to set the limits to the history of the Universe, and to make a rendezvous with the historic terrors of humanity?

Orwell's present glory seems to me to rest on two factors. The first is the affection inspired by his personality throughout his life. The second is the discovery which he made—towards the end with increasing clarity—and which perhaps hastened his death, of the evil that menaces humanity.

Claudel has observed that pure, noble, disinterested souls were to be found in large numbers amongst scholars and musicians, but never amongst writers. Literary history, his colleagues—and it is highly unlikely that he would have excluded himself from the list—offered Claudel a gallery of vain braggarts, impressionable rascals and envious grudge-bearers. Orwell was the exception. His life and work breathed honesty, simplicity and a taste for the truth which, together with the absence of pretension, make up the fundamental Orwellian concept of decency. Decent himself, he wanted to see decent conduct amongst his fellow-men. He did not demand extraordinary self-sacrifices, did not set himself up as a philanthropist, did not abuse the word " charity "; but he wished, obstinately, that man in the concrete should have concrete rights—that he should enjoy decent comfort and education, decent hygiene and dignity.

The idea of decency is not revolutionary since it is neither unlimited nor eschatological. We are far from the Promethean dreams of Marx, from foolish projects to " change man," and from Trotsky's musings on the the average communist man who will be superior to " Michaelangelo and Goethe." It refers, quite simply, to a just society based on natural justice according to classical law, which consists in rendering to each his due, in harming no one and in living honestly. It is not an authoritarian idea, because it does not pretend to control men, nor even to intervene in their lives. Thoroughly English on this point, Orwell had a rigorous sense of the sphere of autonomy that must be given to the individual—the fences that must protect his home, his habits and his pleasures. Socialism, according to him, had as its first duty to leave the citizen in

peace; to allow him to live as he pleased—not in slavery to hard and unhealthy work. Decency is closely related to privacy. It is not therefore a liberal idea. It is also a democratic idea that does not tolerate snobbery, social contempt, differences of status amongst men, nor those small barriers—crossed with difficulty—that divided the society of Orwell's time in every direction. England was undoubtedly more free and less democratic (in the Tocquevillian sense) than France. Orwell prized freedom and loved democracy, perhaps immoderately.

THE Italian philosopher, Vittorio Mathieu, pertinently contrasted the rebel and the revolutionary. The rebel is indignant about injustice and strives, by violent means, to re-establish justice. But he understands justice in the ordinary sense, and its achievement brings an end to his revolt. For the revolutionary, injustice is not the affair of free men who are responsible for what they do. It is a defect in the structure of the world—a vicious disposition on the part of society. In changing the world, in changing society, one suppresses injustice but renders justice useless, since it is assured impersonally by the automatic mechanisms of the perfect society. Orwell is not a revolutionary. But he affords the pure example of a rebel who refuses to reconcile himself to the injustices that he perceives around him, and who rebels—to the point of suffocation—against the absolute injustice of the modern revolutionary who denies, or wants to abolish, the differences between the just and the unjust.

The decent rebel does not sit idle at home. He engages himself personally. Because he rejected colonialism, Orwell resigned from his job. Because he could not bear poverty, he shared the life of the poor in the slums of Paris and London. When he was worried about the appalling living conditions of English workers during the Great Depression he visited workers' houses, took lodgings in their homes, and went down the mines—leaving there a part of his health. When the Spanish War broke out he enlisted in the militia of the POUM, went to war in the 29th division, spent the winter in the trenches, fought and finally was hit by a bullet which went through his neck—usually fatal.

There was in all this, however, an element of illusion and romanticism. After all, Orwell was not the only one of his generation to have taken ideas seriously and to have narrowly missed dying for them. In his destitution in Paris and London, one suspects that poverty held an obscure attraction for him, as his saintly quest for vicarious austerity, a sort of Franciscanism in the raw. There is something a little confused and spurious at the heart of the account he wrote of the subject (*Down and Out In Paris And London*); one cannot see clearly whether this kind of life was something he suffered or sought out. Orwell did not have to become a " socialist " of rather strict obedience, nor to enlist in the ranks of the Independent Labour Party, a left-wing faction of the Labour Movement, in order to write *The Road to Wigan Pier*. And to get a precise

view of what was going on in Spain, it was not essential to give credence to the anarcho-Trotskyite analysis of the " Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista." In short, up to the war, Orwell's rebellion was mixed with a grain of revolutionary ideology, and, because of this, it did not entirely coincide with his fundamental instincts.

Nevertheless, it is this that bursts forth from his first books. In order to place it in the English tradition, we would call it nominalist. Orwell mistrusts universals. He instinctively turns to the individual. He has the gift of avoiding abstract categories such as " the working class " or " the people " or " the anti-Fascist masses." He prefers to concentrate his attention on what is closest to him—this miner, that factory worker, that militiaman—whose lives he patiently tries to understand. If there is a sentimental vein in *Down And Out In Paris And London*, it is eclipsed by the precise descriptions and colourful characters, by the picaresque style and humourous tone. In *The Road To Wigan Pier*, instead of becoming indignant about slums in general, Orwell gives the precise measurements of the living area of one particular slum, sounds out the thickness of the walls, assesses the dampness and ways of remedying it.

THERE is an astonishing passage in *Homage To Catalonia*. It occurs in chapter six after a long exposition of the war as waged by the republican side: rusted guns, soldiers who do not know how to shoot, shells that do not explode, disorder, commotion, inexpressible inefficiency, and underlying everything, a poignant poverty. His regiment launches an attack which, for once, succeeds, and Orwell has the opportunity to visit Franco's trenches. He then discovers that the enemy is in exactly the same situation: badly equipped, lacking leadership, totally untrained, and enduring the same omnipresent poverty with the same brave steadfastness. The way in which Orwell fought, and his feelings for the Spanish people, are a model of nobility. One thinks of Velasquez's painting, " The Surrender of Breda "; the same absence of hatred, the same respect for the enemy, the same regard for History, equally cruel to all men, and the same courtesy and kindliness towards the vanquished. In the midst of this sinister conflict, made abominable and merciless by an ideology, the humanity and courtesy of this gentlemanly warrior remain intact. *Homage to Catalonia* is acknowledged by the whole of Spain to be the most faithful account of the Civil War. It compensates almost single-handed for the pile of poorly informed and fanatical international literature written on the subject. It helps us forget the Spanish escapades of Hemingway and Malraux.

Orwell's moral grandeur would not, however, have been sufficient to secure him the place he occupies today, had he not, before anyone else, been capable of an intellectual discernment which is still profoundly relevant today.

The spark of his intellectual emancipation was kindled in Spain. During the spring of 1937 Orwell spent a few weeks convalescing in Barcelona. The Comintern had taken upon itself the task of transforming Spain into a

popular democracy; the communist Chekas were preparing the ground. Torture chambers were installed behind the lowered iron curtains of Barcelona's shop-fronts. Into these, Orwell's friends began to disappear. POUM militants were being tracked down and liquidated. It was then that Orwell *understood*.

A retrospective glance enables us to put forward two points about the understanding of communism. First, it is either a global phenomenon, or it isn't. Communism is not really complicated, but it is foreign to the common experience of humanity. Furthermore, if it is not perceived as a whole it resists understanding entirely; hence the " experts," whether scholars or pedants, are as a rule unfailingly wrong. When communism is understood it becomes easy to predict. Understanding, however, is achieved only by a few. In any one country at any one moment, no more than a few dozen people altogether will be found capable of an informed judgment and coherent analysis of the subject.

Before the war, communism was all the more of a puzzle, since Nazism, which opposed it, offered no such problems of understanding—presenting itself almost without a mask. Many anti-Nazis (or anti-Fascists, as at that period little distinction was made between Hitler and Mussolini) gravitated towards communism, or at least did not make the effort to see through it. That is why the people who had most success in finding their bearings were those who were living in intimate contact with communism and who, fighting against fascism, intuitively perceived the analogy between these two regimes, and little by little, through comparison, understood the one through the other. The only ones to have had a clear vision of communism during these years were Boris Souvarine, Bertram Wolfe and Arthur Koestler—all former communists—a few trade unionists of the libertarian tradition, and George Orwell. Conservative and liberal thought were not at their most lucid. But the person who went furthest and grasped the philosophic roots of the system was Orwell.

When the insight came it was sudden and all-embracing. This is not to say that Orwell had been in a position to formulate or explain it straight away. But his intelligence, once set in motion, worked through to the end. We can follow the stages of his journey in his collected articles, radio broadcasts, and letters, brought together in the four volumes edited by his wife. For a long time he stalled over the analogy between fascism and communism. The analogy is tempting and illuminating but only up to a certain point, because it is not rigorous, and because fascism and communism are two very different phenomena. In addition, Orwell was hindered by widespread disapproval, because after the outbreak of the Nazi-Soviet war, such a comparison seemed out of place. To measure his progress, one has only to compare his last two published works, *Animal Farm* (1945) and *Nineteen Eight-Four* (1949).

In these last two books, Orwell found the literary formula which was to make him famous. It is a familiar form that has won distinction, above all, in English literature. It combines a fantastical journey with a pessimistic

vision of Utopia, and has already produced *Gulliver's Travels*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Erewhon*, *Doctor Moreau's Island* and *Brave New World*.

ANIMAL Farm is a classic masterpiece. The fable unfolds gracefully, with an irresistible logic, and the satire scores a direct bull's-eye. The target is the history of the USSR.

On the peaceful, old-fashioned and disorderly farm a pig invents a salvationist ideology: animalism. Man is the root of all evil. Banish man from the farm: this is the simple and universal solution to all problems. The animals are taken in by it. The panorama of history is spread out, illuminated before them. Organized by the Pig Party, they revolt and chase out the farmers. To begin with everyone is happy. The constitution stipulates that all animals are equal. The farm runs smoothly. A " re-education committee " teaches everybody to read and inculcates animalism, summed up in the formula: " four legs good, two legs bad." The former proprietors stage a raid: they are gloriously defeated.

However, the pigs do not do any work: they direct and supervise the work of everyone else. Soon they harness themselves to the construction of animalism. They " modernize " and " industrialize " by building a windmill. One of the historic leaders of the Pig Revolution is eliminated. The Pig Police stage the re-appearance of his ghost at the same moment that the mausoleum of the founder pig is erected. Forced labour is instituted. When a storm destroys the mill culprits are found and the farm becomes the scene of major trials. The history of the revolution is rewritten, the cult of " father of all animals " takes shape, and one fine morning the poor old horse, loved by everybody, who worked hard without asking questions, is discreetly conducted to the abattoir. The Seven Commandments are " adapted " and given a new form: no animal shall kill another animal *without cause*; all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others. In the final chapter the pigs (who now live as humans, walk erect on two legs, sleep in beds and drink whisky) banquet with the neighbouring farmers and play cards with the former proprietors, whilst the farm animals, stupefied, watch from outside, unable to distinguish the men from the pigs. The irony is effective because the fable reproduces the history of the USSR in some detail. It also exactly reproduces the history of every country that has since been engaged in the construction of socialism. *Habeas corpus* as it is written in the constitution of The People's Republic of China prescribes that no one may be arrested " without a police order." This is pure Orwell.

And yet, a defective schema prevents the demystification from being carried right through to the end. Orwell envisages Soviet history as a revolution in the astronomical sense of a return to the point of departure. The pigs have overthrown the privileged class. They become in their turn a privileged class. *Animal Farm* suffered from a " leftist " critique, outlined by Trotskyites at the time, a theme which was to be resumed in the future by many theoreticians who likened the Soviet regime to a " bureaucracy," to the domination of a " new class," to a " stratocracy,"

that is to say to a society fundamentally based on the same model as our own, if one leaves aside the particular characteristics of the ruling group. Orwell remains a prisoner of the approach-through-analogy to the communist world, the other referential points of the analogy being " fascism " or " capitalism " as they were understood in the 1940s. It is from this that Orwell broke away in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

NINETEEN Eighty-Four was written with far greater difficulty than *Animal Farm*. The exploration of these frightening territories had been painful and exhausting. The writing has not the same ease, nor the style the same fluency. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is also more difficult to understand. Isaac Deutscher, a Trotskyite to the core, was of the opinion that Orwell was satirizing the Labour Party! An article in *Pravda* of 30 May 1983, cites him as denouncing the . . . United States of America! This last assertion would have confirmed Orwell in his most gloomy premonitions. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* resumes, whilst exploring in greater depth, most of the insights of *Animal Farm*, but it detaches them from their narrow Soviet context. The new totalitarianism is not localized within the limits of the former Tsarist empire. It is not the continuation of Russian imperialism. This gives Orwell a considerable lead in understanding over de Gaulle, Kissinger, Brzezinski and all those who obstinately see communism as purely an affair of the Russian state. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, communism or " Ingsoc "—the name matters little—has triumphed throughout the world and the action takes place in what was once England. It has universal application: no country is protected by its national essence.

Orwell was inspired by a Utopia written in 1920 by a little-known Soviet writer, Evgenii Zamyatin. If we refer to his book *We*, a contrast is immediately apparent. Zamyatin had drawn a picture of a future society as morally terrifying, but materially successful in a futuristic triumph of technical modernization. However, Orwell, with the foresight of a genius, paints the landscape of " really existing socialism " as we know it today. England has become a vague terrain where the nineteenth-century squalor completes its collapse into decay. Everything is dirty and shabby. The gin stinks, the bread is bad, the coffee and sugar taste suspect. The smell of cabbage, of urine, of sour beer penetrates everywhere. Essential consumer goods are constantly missing from the shops. The " proletariat " is abandoned to slums, alcoholism and cheap debauchery.

Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor had promised material plenty in exchange for liberty, and those who praised collectivization, five-year plans, and the Chinese " Great Leap Forward " believed this promise. Orwell was the first to predict that the famous bowl of rice would never be full. He saw through the total impotence of these so-called " materialists " to act upon matter in any way other than to spoil, botch and destroy it. There is even in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* a sketch, which is concise but reasoned and entirely operational, of a socialist political economy. Orwell saw the link between a permanent war economy and poverty, the

social necessity for poverty, the fabrication of statistics, and the sterilization of creative thought.

The political picture so closely resembles Stalinist Russia—so badly understood at the time when Orwell wrote his book—that one wonders how he could have reconstructed it. The cult of Big Brother, the Thought Police, the lack of points of reference due to the control of information, the perpetual falsification of history (" he who controls the past, controls the future "), the suppression of memory, political somersaults that result in the liquidation of former rulers, the obliteration of their names and faces from history—all this was part of the Soviet syndrome; of the Chinese, Cuban, Vietnamese and Bulgarian syndromes too. Orwell discovered the most general laws of communism—applicable to countries that had had their revolution, to those that have had it since, and to those where it still remains to take place. The precision of the description is something mysterious and miraculous, and one can even say that it is still more perfect today than it was in 1949, because developed communism manifests some aspects that were then only latent. At the very most one can observe that the role of Big Brother is less personalized today than it was in Stalin's time; also one remembers that Orwell had taken care to strip Big Brother of all personal characteristics, even to the point of not giving him a name.

The point is that Orwell has placed himself above economics and politics. He has arrived at the metaphysics of communism, from which politics and economics are then deduced geometrically. At the heart of the enterprise he perceived a radical perversion of what the Ancients called the " transcendentals ": the True and the Good. He anticipated Solzhenitsyn: the essence of such regimes (in this context the Soviet system is nothing but one particular case and Hitlerism another) is not the imposition of tyranny, but the imposition of falsehood. This falsehood is generalized to the point where truth is definitively lost, and with truth, all contact with reality. The lie replaces reality. The construction of socialism is the construction of a fiction.

As an artist, Orwell gives tangible body to these abstractions. He makes the consequences of the basic principle visible in everyday life. The first is an inversion of the meaning of words. The three slogans of the Party are: " War is Peace. Freedom is Slavery. Ignorance is Strength." Torture is administered by the Minister of Love. From this inversion is deduced the Thought Police, the control of the past, the eradication of memory, the art of lying while still believing, which the poet Aragon, himself a virtuoso of doublethink calls: " to tell a true lie " (*le mentir-vrai*). Thus a language of a new kind is developed, generalized, and imposed on everyone; a language destined not to communicate but to dominate, not to indicate real things but to suggest non-existent things; a language which has a special vocabulary, syntax and diction, for which Orwell gave the first grammar in his chapter on " Newspeak " and which is now universally known in France as the " wooden language " (*la langue de bois*).

The next consequence is the degradation of the human body and face, blemished by material misery, but above all disfigured " from inside " by an intellectual and moral mutilation. Orwell saw in advance the " grey expressionless faces with tiny eyes " which proliferated in the tribunes and corridors of the Ministries. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* tells of the doomed effort of one of them to recover the human condition. This redemption would have consisted in thinking (in default of saying) that two plus two equals four. Even that is too difficult. Love remains; not even that—desire. Because that which compels man towards woman, simple desire, is the last sign of humanity; the first step towards liberation. It is also the first subversive act, and it will be monstrously punished.

This filthy, deserted, cold world—where hatred rules and ordinary conversation is overrun by the wooden language—contains a " central secret." And, " this secret is . . ." But Orwell stops, and if he was given a glimpse of it, then he does not let on. In the book of Exodus, Moses is warned that man cannot look upon God without dying. Perhaps neither is it possible to approach absolute evil without running the same risk. Having published *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell died on 21 January 1950, aged 47.

Translated by Rebecca Penrose

The Problem of Totalitarianism*

Carl Gershman

IF one is thinking in 1984 about the problem of totalitarianism, one should begin with a reference to George Orwell. The fact that we have finally entered that fateful year, 1984, has precipitated a great Orwell boom. Everybody, it seems, wants to get in on the act, even the Soviet Union. The fact that Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is banned in the Soviet Union because of the book's vivid portrayal of totalitarianism has not prevented Soviet publicists from extolling the novel as a devastating indictment of " bourgeois democracy " where " the poisonous roots of anti-humanism, all-devouring militarism and oppression have today thrust up truly monstrous shoots."

Official Soviet commentators are not the only ones to espouse this point of view. Recently, the US office at the UN in New York received an invitation from an elected official in the US to attend a conference on " Orwell's 1984: Fact or Fiction." The conference theme was described in the following manner:

> The arrival of 1984 is a compelling time to explore what Orwellian parallels exist in our society today. Has our fear of a war too devastating to contemplate pushed us closer to the garrison state? Have we allowed our human, economic, and individual rights to be eroded in the name of national security? Has modern technology made privacy obsolete? Are there constraints on the media that affect the people's right to know? These are some of the questions we will be seeking to answer.

The author of this letter undoubtedly did not appreciate the irony that the letter itself, which suggests that democratic society is totalitarian, was a marvellous example of the Orwellian inversion of the truth.

Orwell's ruling passion was his profound opposition to totalitarianism, and a major part of his intellectual energies was devoted to countering totalitarian sympathies within the British intelligentsia. While fully aware of the outward manifestations of totalitarianism—the purges, deportations, massacres, famines, aggressive wars, and broken treaties—Orwell's greatest achievement was to expose its philosophical essence. " The really frightening thing about totalitarianism," he wrote, " is not that it commits ' atrocities ' but that it attacks the concept of the objective truth: it claims to control the past as well as the future."

The attack upon the concept of objective truth is the core of totalitarianism. To control the past is to control memory, consciousness, the inner self. This is the goal of a system which seeks total power. In this respect modern totalitarianism differs from traditional autocracies which

* Address to the Council of the European Liaison Group, The House of Commons, 21 February 1984.

limit the rights of individuals and often punish those who challenge the authority of the state. While such autocracies demand passive obedience, the totalitarian party demands active partisanship, ideological conviction, and complete subordination. It seeks to create a " new " individual whose consciousness is shaped by the party and who does not have any personal existence independent of the collectivity.

It is in this context that we can understand the practice, common to both Nazi and Communist totalitarianism, of the use of psychiatry to repress political dissent. Such abuse of psychiatry is the natural by-product of a political culture which seeks to control the inner life, indeed the soul, of the human being as well as his actions.

The ability of a regime to determine arbitrarily how " truth " is perceived is an instrument of control that signifies total domination. It also enables the regime to conceal the violence which is an intrinsic part of the system. Lenin was quite explicit about the centrality of violence in establishing and maintaining totalitarian power. " Dictatorship," he wrote, in *The Proletarian Revolution*, " is rule based directly upon force ... The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, rule that is unrestricted by any laws." The method of violence was not only to be used against the bourgeoisie, but also against those whom Lenin contemptuously called the " centrists " and " defenders of democracy " whom he accused of " collaboration " with the bourgeoisie.

As Solzhenitsyn pointed out in his Nobel Lecture, such violence cannot exist without lies. " They are linked in the most intimate, most organic and profound fashion," he wrote; " violence cannot conceal itself behind anything except lies, and lies have nothing to maintain them save violence. Anyone who has once proclaimed violence as his *method* must inexorably choose the lie as his *principle*."

The lie does not only conceal violence: it legitimizes it. Since a totalitarian regime does not, by definition, derive legitimacy from the freely expressed wishes of the people, it relies upon ideological claims and upon an elaborately constructed ideological façade. Communism especially needs to improve upon the truth because of the vast discrepancy between its ideological claims and the real nature of its rule. While promising a higher form of democracy, it destroys democracy entirely. While proclaiming a dictatorship of the proletariat, it imposes a dictatorship over the proletariat. In the name of a higher equality, it holds the people in a state of virtually undifferentiated powerlessness. And in the name of liberation it violates systematically the principle of self-determination.

IN addition to legitimizing the power of the regime, ideology is also used to justify whatever steps must be taken to maintain and expand that power. When the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, it set forth in *Pravda* (26 September 1968) the doctrine of " limited

sovereignty," otherwise known as the Brezhnev Doctrine, according to which the Soviet Union claimed not only the right to invade any Soviet bloc country that threatened to deviate from the path of absolute fealty to Moscow, but also the right to intervene in the internal affairs of non-Soviet bloc states on behalf of " progressive forces," or at least forces that the Soviets choose to define as progressive.

Ideology is the means by which this doctrine of limited sovereignty for other countries is reconciled with the doctrine of absolute sovereignty for the Soviet Union, a sovereignty so absolute that it justifies shooting down a civilian airliner that happens to stray over the " sacred borders " of the Soviet Union. Accordingly, the 1968 article in *Pravda* states that " Laws and the norms of law are subordinated to the laws of the class struggle and the laws of social development . . . The class approach to the matter cannot be discarded in the name of legalistic considerations. Whoever does so forfeits the only correct, class-orientated criterion for evaluating legal norms and begins to measure events with the yardsticks of bourgeois law."

In other words, there are two forms of law—" bourgeois law," which includes the Charter of the United Nations and the principle of self-determination as it is defined there, and the " laws of the class struggle," to which the principle of national sovereignty and self-determination is clearly subordinate. This dual conception of international law accords to the Soviet Union absolute rights but no obligation to respect the rights of others, while it accords to all other states no rights at all but an absolute obligation to respect the rights of the Soviet Union. It is the application of totalitarian principles to international relations.

Given the ideological character of totalitarianism, the intimate relationship between violence and the lie, it should not be surprising that the violence inherent in totalitarianism is not self-evident, at least not to people who have had no personal knowledge of this system. In *The Totalitarian Temptation*, Jean-François Revel attributes the persistence in the West of illusions about communism to the fact that it is " the first regime in history to be reactionary at home and revolutionary abroad, oppressive in its domination and liberating in its propaganda. Those who wish for it have never experienced it; all they see of Communism is its critiques " of other systems.

Totalitarianism obscures the truth by engaging in a kind of verbal imperialism. Not content with having appropriated the words democracy, peace and liberation to its ideological arsenal, it even lays claim to the word totalitarianism itself. We have seen this tactic in the United Nations where the representative of the government of Poland, which had forcibly suppressed the free and independent trade union " Solidarity," condemned the " false freedom and sham democracy," indeed, the " totalitarianism," of the West. He went so far as to characterize the US attitude towards totalitarianism as " the moving spirit of totalitarian propaganda." Presumably Poland cannot itself be totalitarian if it condemns totalitarianism by name.

Similarly, in the General Assembly of the United Nations and in the Human Rights Commission, the Soviet bloc annually presents a resolution condemning Nazism and other forms of totalitarianism, as if such a tactic could obscure the structural equivalence between Nazi and Communist totalitarianism.

WHILE it is unlikely that many people in the West are fooled by such propaganda, there is also a distinct reluctance to recognize the true nature of totalitarianism—a tendency that is reinforced by the closed nature of totalitarian systems and their inaccessibility to Western media. This tendency, which Jeane Kirkpatrick, the US ambassador to the United Nations, has called " the will to disbelieve," is deeply rooted in our political culture. Here is how Saul Bellow reflected upon this phenomenon in his last novel, *The Dean's December*:

> Liberalism had never accepted the Leninist premise that this was an age of wars and revolutions. Where the Communists saw class war, civil war, pictures of catastrophe, we saw only temporary aberration. Capitalist democracies could never be at home with the catastrophic outlook. We are used to peace and plenty. We are for everything nice and against cruelty and wickedness and craftiness, monstrousness. . . . Our outlook requires the assumption that each of us is at heart trustworthy. Each of us is naturally decent and wills the good.

One manifestation of " the will to disbelieve " is the continuing belief in the possibility of a non-totalitarian communism—a possibility that Leszek Kolakowski, the exiled Polish philosopher, has said is as realistic as " the idea of fried snowballs." It persists most notably with respect to conflicts within Third World countries. The Report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, the so-called Kissinger Commission, addressed this point with clarity:

> Because the Marxist-Leninist insurgents appeal to often legitimate grievances, a popular school of thought holds that guerrilla leaders are the engines of reform. They characteristically reinforce this by inviting well-meaning democratic leaders to participate in a Popular Front, taking care, however, to retain in their own hands a monopoly of the instruments of force. If the insurgents were in fact the vehicles for democratic and social progress, the entire security issue would be moot; they would no longer be the problem, but rather the solution.
>
> Unfortunately, history offers no basis for such optimism. No Marxist-Leninist " popular front " insurgency has ever turned democratic *after* the victory. Cuba and Nicaragua are striking examples. Regimes created by the victory of Marxist-Leninist guerrillas become totalitarian. That is their purpose, their nature, their doctrine, and their record.

(I might add that regimes created by Marxist-Leninist *coups* also become

totalitarian, which of course was the case in Grenada which is now liberated in the true sense.)

The counter-argument to this is that the Marxist-Leninist guerrillas imposed a totalitarian order not out of choice but because the hostile policies of the United States left them with no alternative. Were the US to behave in a different, more conciliatory manner, then presumably Cuba and Nicaragua would be pluralistic and would not have turned to the Soviet Union. It has been stated repeatedly, for example, that it is entirely the fault of the Reagan Administration that the Sandinista government in Nicaragua has built up its military beyond anything ever known before in Central America, consolidated power in the hands of the Party, tightly controlled the democratic opposition, aided Marxist-Leninist insurgent movements in neighbouring countries, and allied itself with the Soviet Union. What this argument entirely ignores, of course, is that the Sandinista regime began charting a totalitarian and pro-Soviet course well before the Reagan Administration came into office.

Eighteen months elapsed between the assumption of power by the revolutionary government in Nicaragua and the inauguration of the Reagan Administration. The US AID director in Nicaragua during that period, Lawrence E. Harrison, wrote that in the two years after the revolution, " the US government was the most important source of food aid and one of the most important sources of financial aid to revolutionary Nicaragua. We provided assistance valued at $120 million, including 100,000 tons of food. We had tried very hard to build that new relationship. But the effort failed, principally, I believe, because the Sandinistas could not live with a positive image of the US government. They did not try at all. And many in the United States cheered them on."

Let us look at what the Sandinista government did during that 18-month period:

—In August 1979 the Sandinistas began a military build-up which in two years created an armed force three times the size of Somoza's National Guard and twice that of the Honduran army.

—In September 1979 leading Sandinistas prepared a blueprint, commonly called " the 72-hour document," for eventual Marxist-Leninist control of Nicaragua. Central to the Sandinista strategy was the systematic, gradual removal of Nicaraguan democrats.

—From August to October 1979, the Sandinistas moved to consolidate all labour unions under the two Sandinista umbrella organizations. By the end of 1979, two-thirds of Nicaragua's organized workers were absorbed into Sandinista organizations affiliated to the Soviet-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions.

—In March 1980, four top Sandinista leaders, including Interior Minister Tomas Borge and Defence Minister Humberto Ortega, made an official visit to the Soviet Union where they signed a joint communiqué with the Soviet Communist Party formalizing Nicaragua's allegiance to Soviet global policy. Among other things, the communiqué attacked the NATO decision to deploy medium-range missiles and condemned the

" mounting international tension in connection with the events in Afghanistan, which has been launched by the imperialist and reactionary forces aimed at subverting the inalienable rights of the people of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and of other peoples . . . to follow a path of progressive transformation."

—In April 1980 the Sandinistas moved to consolidate their control, packing the Council of State and forcing the resignation from the junta of the two independents, Alfonso Robelo and Violetta Chamorro. A Sandinista-backed strike against Nicaragua's only independent daily, *La Prensa*, forced the paper to close for several days.

—In July 1980 Defence Minister Ortega announced that there was no need for elections since the people had " voted " during the revolution. The following month he announced the postponement of elections until 1985, stating that in any event these would not be " bourgeois " elections, but rather " people's " elections in which, as Borge put it, power " will not be raffled off."

—In September 1980 the Sandinistas imposed press restrictions designed to inhibit reporting of internal dissention.

—By October 1980 more than 4,000 Cubans had arrived in Nicaragua, and the Sandinista government had signed military and technical aid agreements with the Soviet Union and East Germany.

—On 8 November 1980, the Sandinistas denied Robelo a permit to hold a public meeting, while Sandinista mobs vandalized his home. The government ordered a news black-out of the incident.

—That same month, the leader of the private sector, Jorge Salazar, was murdered by elements of the government security forces. As a result, private sector and independent political parties withdrew from the Council of State.

—In December and January Sandinista commanders facilitated a large clandestine arms airlift to the Salvadorean insurgents.

A quotation from an editorial in *The New York Times*, dated 21 November 1980, recalls the mood of the period:

> The fading Carter Administration, which went out on a political limb to help the Sandinista Government, is now entitled, and obliged, to ask some pointed questions. Why are the Sandinistas becoming more repressive? What happened to their promise of a pluralistic society?

The editorial continued:

> Unless the Sandinistas intended ultimately to establish a Cuban-style one-party dictatorship, they have no reason for so harassing and intimidating the private sector opposition.

In a sense, the answer to Lawrence Harrison was provided by the Sandinista Minister of Health in a conversation over dinner while both were in Washington to lobby Congress for increased economic aid to Nicaragua. When asked why the Sandinistas echoed Cuba's distorted

attacks upon the United States, the minister replied: " You don't understand revolutionary truth. What is true is what serves the ends of the revolution."

THE tendency to blame the United States for acts of totalitarian callousness is sometimes carried to truly astounding extremes. I note, for example, an article that appeared in the *Guardian* by R. W. Johnson, a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, which argued that the shooting down by the Soviet Union of Korean Airliner KAL 007 had been planned by the United States as a means of swaying public opinion in favour of the installation of medium-range missiles in Western Europe. Mr Johnson was not able to produce a shred of evidence to support his elaborate tale—indeed, he writes that " it is impossible to say that the scenario is true "—yet this does not stop him from accusing the United States of " a massive and bloody attempt to manipulate Western opinion and stampede the US allies into a new escalation of the arms race." Not only is the Soviet Union, which shot down the airliner, not criticized at all, but its innocence is supposedly proved by " the most telling fact of all "—the fact that it refused to apologize for shooting down the plane. It is worth noting that this disgraceful fabrication was reprinted in January 1984 in four Australian newspapers, only one of which agreed to publish a detailed reply by a US official.

Attributing the aggressive behaviour of totalitarianism to American provocation is, of course, just one way of not having to face up to the full implications of totalitarian aggressiveness. At worst, it is the result of deliberate deception and disinformation; at best, it is a manifestation of self-delusion based upon a desire to escape a harsh reality. But self-delusion does not make danger go away, a point made by the bishops of France when they warned against " closing one's eye to the domineering and aggressive character of Marxism-Leninism, which holds that everything, even a nation's hopes for peace, must be used as a tool for world conquest."

It is not difficult for totalitarians to exploit " the will to disbelieve," especially at a time when the totalitarian idea is backed up by awesome military power and there is an understandable yearning for peace. But peace will never come through appeasement, a point as valid today as it was in the 1930s. The belief that appeasement can lead to peace is wrong because it is based upon a fundamental misreading of Soviet intentions, a misreading that is rooted in an illusion of moral symmetry which holds that totalitarian states behave like democracies. In fact, they behave as differently as their antipodal political philosophies and internal structures might suggest. If the Soviet Union really were the " peace-loving " society we hear so much about in Soviet propaganda, then our so-called hawks *would* strengthen their hawks, as it is sometimes claimed, just as the invasion of Afghanistan and the Soviet military build-up over the past two decades stiffened the will to resist in the United States. But if they are

not peace-loving, our will to resist aggression will help preserve peace, not provoke war.

Valentin Turchin, who founded the Moscow chapter of Amnesty International, has written that to the extent that one can speak at all of doves in the Kremlin, they are " those who believe more in the ability of the West to hit back, and therefore counsel caution. This is the anti-symmetry—doves in the West support and encourage hawks in the USSR, while the hawks support the doves."

If there is a new possibility for meaningful dialogue today between the United States and the Soviet Union, it is owing to the refusal of the West to succumb to Soviet blandishments. The restoration of American political will and the strengthening of our deterrence have, as President Reagan said on 16 January 1984, made " the world a safer place—safer because now there is less danger that the Soviet leadership will underestimate our strength or question our resolve."

But if the world is safer, it does not follow that it is safe. The absence of war is not the same as peace. As Solzhenitsyn has pointed out, peace is the absence of violence. As long as whole peoples are subjected to totalitarianism and revolutionary violence is used to overthrow governments so as to expand the domain of totalitarian control, there cannot be peace. In this sense, peace cannot be separated from freedom, a point emphasized by Lech Walesa in his Nobel Lecture. It can only come through the gradual non-violent lifting of the totalitarian yoke.

THE heroic struggles of Andrei Sakharov, Yurii Orlov, Anatoly Shcharansky, Anatoly Koryagin and so many countless others are thus intimately connected to the prospects for enhancing international peace and security. The struggle of " Solidarity " to create pluralist forms of social existence within a totalitarian system and to do so non-violently, despite the absence of any formal means of democratic political expression, offers the hope of a peaceful way out of the totalitarian nightmare—a hope that cannot be extinguished by any temporary setback to an inexorable process.

If it is true that those within totalitarianism look to free peoples for moral and political support, and that they expect such support and are entitled to it, it is also true that the free peoples of the world will not remain free if they turn their backs upon the oppressed and do not heed their message. It is a message that affirms the value of freedom and warns against the danger of complacency, a message that if properly understood can sustain the will to resist violence by exposing the lies that conceal it.

In a letter smuggled to the West from his exile in Gorky, where his own life and that of his wife Elena Bonner are now in jeopardy, Andrei Sakharov warned that " the world is facing very difficult times and cruel cataclysms if the West and the developing countries trying to find their place in the world do not now show the required firmness, unity and consistency in resisting the totalitarian challenge . . . It is important that

the common danger be fully understood—everything else will then fall into place." Armed with this kind of understanding, free societies will be able to survive the multiple assaults of totalitarianism and establish the conditions of genuine peace.

ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV

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Manès Sperber (1905—1984)

THE name of another friend and contributor to *Survey* must now be added to the list published in the last issue of so many other recently departed friends.

Munio, as he was affectionately called, was one of an extraordinary company of talented writers who became cosmopolitans because, as victims of Nazism and/or Communism, they had to seek refuge in a number of different countries. Many of them were ex-communists who displayed an early and penetrating understanding (from personal experience) of the nature of totalitarianism.

Manès Sperber was born in Zablotov in what was then the part of Poland incorporated in the Austrian Empire. In 1914 he moved with his family to Vienna where he studied psychology, became Alfred Adler's assistant, and eventually settled to teach at the University of Berlin in 1933. He escaped to France in 1934 and 3 years later left the Communist Party of which he had been a member since 1927.

He described his political and intellectual experiences in novelistic form in a trilogy published under the title *Like a Tear in the Ocean* (consisting of 3 volumes: *The Burned Bramble*, *The Abyss* and *Journey Without End*) which was praised by a kindred spirit, Arthur Koestler, as an " extraordinary adventure of the human spirit."

After the war, Munio, who lost the friendship of his teacher Alfred Adler when he joined the Communist Party, became an anti-communist. In his trilogy, he painted a warm portrait of his deceased master whose philosophy of life he understood only long after their separation. He wrote a book about Adler (which I tried—unsuccessfully—to have published in English).

Sperber was also very active in the Congress for Cultural Freedom. A number of his essays (some of which appeared in its publications) were collected in the volume, *Achilles' Heel*. Later in his life he wrote 3 volumes of autobiography and became recognized as a *maître à penser* in France, Germany and Austria. He was very close to André Malraux and Raymond Aron, and knew a great number of leading intellectuals and writers of our century. He worked on his manuscripts with extraordinary intensity. He received the Peace Prize at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 1983, but was too ill to accept it in person. I last saw him when he took part in a German Television debate on the Holocaust earlier that year. To be in his company was always an extremely pleasant and intellectually stimulating experience.

His books will continue to stimulate.

L.L.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Mr Weeks, reviewing the new Soviet military encyclopaedia in the Spring 1982 issue of *Survey*, finds that its authors consider nuclear war winnable by the Soviet side, and advocate that the USSR seek military superiority. My own examination of the encyclopaedia, carried out in the Baykov Library of the Centre of Russian and East European Studies of the University of Birmingham, does not support such categorical conclusions.

According to Mr Weeks, the entry " Military Doctrine " states that nuclear war would spell the end of " capitalist civilization " and the establishment of world-wide socialism and a lasting peace. Unfortunately, try as I might, I could find no entry for " Military Doctrine " at all.

According to Mr Weeks, the entry on " Pacifism " states that all would not be lost in a nuclear war, and that it could not be said that a nuclear war would not have been " worth it." I could find no such statements under this entry, which does not deal with the consequences of nuclear war.

According to Mr Weeks, the entry " Superiority over the enemy " shows that the USSR seeks " military-technical superiority." In fact, this entry discusses " superiority " as a state which may be attained during the course of war itself, and does not discuss the desirability of superiority in the intitial relationship of forces.

The entries " Cosmic War " and " Laser," Mr Weeks claims, state that space war is an area where superiority could prove crucial. I could not find these statements.

My own reading of the encyclopaedia suggests that the authors avoid giving clear support to the new official line that it is impossible to win nuclear war, but that they also avoid clear opposition to it. Their attitude to the official line that the USSR does not seek military superiority appears to be similarly evasive. The interpretation of this ambiguity is by no means obvious: it could conceal internal conflict, or it could mean that the military are restricted to dealing with purely technical questions, leaving broad strategic judgments to the political leadership.

Nevertheless, such entries as " War " and " Nuclear War " quote the statement from the documents of the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969 to the effect that nuclear war " would mean the death of hundreds of millions of people, and turn the treasure-house of world civilization and culture into ruins and ashes." It is significant that the authors choose not to quote more recent political statements on the subject, presumably because these unequivocally reject the idea of victory. But even the statement quoted is hardly compatible with the attitude that a " socialist " outcome to nuclear war would make it worthwhile, as attributed to the authors by Mr Weeks. Soviet doctrine holds, after all, that socialism will be victorious anyway in

the absence of war—as Soviet military men pointed out in their polemics with the Chinese.

There are certainly many disturbing features in the Soviet military encyclopaedia—the hagiography under the entry " Stalin," to take just one example. But the reader has the right to expect a certain level of objectivity in the analysis of these vital matters.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Shenfield
Birmingham
29 November 1983

Reply to Stephen Shenfield

Mr Shenfield claims to have difficulty finding the statements that I alluded to in my review of *Sovetskaya Voyennaya Entsiklopediya*. The following may help him find his way through the ponderous eight volumes if not the stilted Russian that is contained in them.

First, Mr Shenfield says he can " find no entry for ' Military Doctrine ' at all." Here is the relevant reference: Doctrine, Military (*Doktrina, Voyennaya*, in Vol. 3 of *SVE*). He should be more attentive (or improve his Russian) before charging me with inventing non-existent articles in the *Entsiklopediya*. Again: the statement about the " destruction of the capitalist system " can be found in this article on p. 228, col. 1, paragraph 3, last sentence.

Second, Shenfield is dead wrong, as he is in all his other observations, about what the *SVE* says under " Superiority over the Enemy," Vol. 6 p. 500, col. 2, second paragraph of that article. Here he will find the statement that such Soviet superiority "*is achieved basically in peacetime*."

Shenfield's other queries likewise can be resolved by his brushing up on his Russian or reading *SVE* more closely than he did when he offered his objections. I would suggest that he should read the suggested literature at the bottom of such *SVE* articles as " Pacifism," " War," " Firepower Superiority," " Civil Defence," *et al.*, where he will find, if not clearly enough stated in the *SVE* article itself, additional " Required Reading " which should prove enlightening to Mr Shenfield. Such additional reading, recommended to soldiers in *SVE*, includes: *Marxism-Leninism on War and Army*; *Philosophical Heritage of V.I. Lenin and Problems of Contemporary War*; *War and Army*, and other works dating from the contemporary period of Soviet military writings on nuclear war, etc.

Many of the most useful books are, in fact, cited at the end of the *SVE* article entitled " War " as well as " Military Doctrine," which the reader said he couldn't find.

I also strongly advise him to ground himself in some basic Western texts on Soviet military doctrine, strategy and tactics, and the current Soviet

arguments about Soviet principles of waging war. Books on the subject include:

1. Mark E. Miller, *Soviet Strategic Power and Doctrine: the Quest for Superiority*, Advanced International Studies Institute, Washington DC, 1982.
2. Joseph D. Douglass, Jr, Amoretta M. Hoeber, *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War*, Hoover International Studies, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, California, 1979.
3. Michael J. Deane, *Strategic Defence in Soviet Strategy*, AISI, Washington DC, 1980.
4. John J. Dziak, *Soviet Perceptions of Military Power: the Interaction of Theory and Practice*, National Strategy Information Centre, NY, Crane, Russak & Company, Inc., NY, 1981.
5. Albert L. Weeks, "The Garthoff-Pipes Debate on Soviet Doctrine: Another Perspective," in *Strategic Review* (Cambridge, Massachusetts), Winter 1983, pp. 57–64, including suggested reading in Soviet military writings.

Finally, I should be happy to correspond with Mr Shenfield, if he is interested in pursuing the matter further:

37 Washington Square West
New York, NY 10011, USA.

Sincerely,
Albert L. Weeks
New York
13 December 1983

Our Contributors

Alain Besançon was born in 1932 in Paris. He is at present Professor at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. His latest books are *Intellectual Origins of Leninism, The Confusion of Tongues and L'Anatomie d'un Spectre.*

Peter Deli is a lecturer in History at the University of Hong Kong. He worked on problems of International Communism in Paris and at St Antony's College, Oxford. In 1981 he published a book on the French Left entitled *De Budapest à Prague: les sursauts de la gauche français.*

Pierre du Bois is Professor at L'Institut Universitaire d'Etudes Européennes, Geneva.

Nick Eberstadt is Visiting Fellow at the Harvard Centre for Population Studies and a doctoral student in Political Economy and Government at the Kennedy School of Government.

Iain Elliot is Senior Lecturer in Russian Studies at Brighton Polytechnic. He is editor of the fortnightly commentary *Soviet Analyst* and a foreign leader writer for *The Times.*

David Floyd was for many years the London *Daily Telegraph*'s correspondent on communist affairs and has written and translated books in that field. He now writes for the *Daily Mail.*

Carl Gershman is Senior Counsellor to the US Permanent Representative to the United Nations. A former Executive Director of the Social Democrats USA, he has written articles in many journals and magazines.

Philip Hanson is a Reader in Soviet Economics at the University of Birmingham. He has also taught at the universities of Exeter and Michigan, and worked for the (UK) Treasury and Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He writes the Economist Intelligence Unit's *Quarterly Economic Review of the USSR.* His books include *Trade and Technology in Soviet-Western Relations* (1981).

Michel Heller is Maitre-Assistant at the Sorbonne in Paris. He is author of *Le Monde Concentrationnaire et la Littérature Soviétique, L'Utopie au Pouvoir, Histoire de L'URSS de 1917 à nos jours* (with A. Nekrich), *Sous le regard de Moscou: Pologne 1980–82* and *Andrej Platonov en quête de bonheur.*

Amy W. Knight is a Soviet affairs analyst at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. She received her Ph.D. from the London School of Economics and Political Science and is the author of numerous articles in the fields of Russian History and Soviet Politics.

Peter Knirsch is Professor of Economics and holds the Chair of Economics and Technology in Eastern Europe at the East European Institute of the Free University of Berlin. He has studied in Munich, Erlangen, and West Berlin and wrote his doctoral thesis on Bukharin's economic views. He has written widely on economic and social developments in Eastern Europe and on East–West economic relations.

JOHN MACDONALD is a human rights lawyer. He has appeared for the Banabans of Ocean Island, he defended Yurii Orlov—chairman of the Moscow Helsinki group—and represented Canadian Indians against the United Kingdom Government. He was Liberal candidate for Folkestone and Hythe in the 1983 general election.

O. L. SMARYL is an engineer by profession. He has taught in various universities in the West.

DORA STURMAN was born in 1923 in the USSR. She was imprisoned in 1944 as a result of her university research on the poetry of Pasternak, Mayakovsky and Batritsky. She worked as a school-teacher whilst continuing her illegal research on the Soviet system. In 1977 she emigrated to Israel where she now works as a researcher at the Centre for Soviet and East European Studies of the Jewish University in Jerusalem. She has since published three books and over 80 articles which have appeared in English, German and Hebrew.

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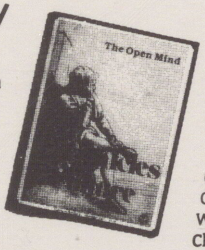

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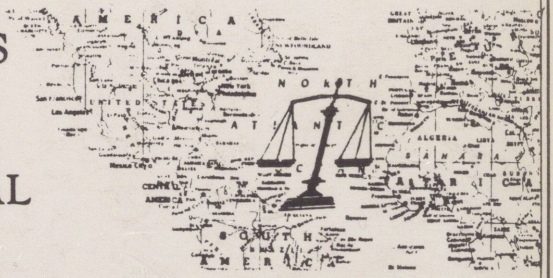

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